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May

ROYAL

6D NET.

Striking features by

Gladys Cooper,
Lady Warwick,
May Edginton,
Jessie Pope,
The Rev. R. J. Campbell
Owen Oliver,
Wm. Le Queux,
Horatio Bottomley,
Etc.

"TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE."

(See Page 3

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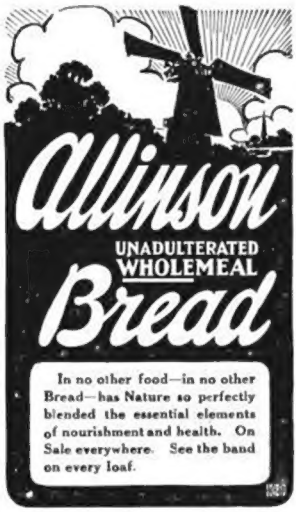

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TESTIMONIAL.

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Photo *Fradelum & Bentfield.*

AN APPEAL TO YOU.

In the next few pages I have tried to tell you about my own kiddies, who are as happy as most small people, I think. Here I want to appeal to you on behalf of children who, unfortunately, are not always happy.

They are the children who live in cities, and whose parents can't afford a holiday for them. They would never enjoy the delights of the country if it wasn't for the Fresh Air Fund.

I am appealing in the ROYAL this year for the F.A.F. Once before when I did this you were very kind and subscribed a great deal of money. Will you please do so again this year, when, owing to the war and the absence of their fathers on service, the children's need is greater, and when the expenses are heavier on account of the rise in prices?

The Fresh Air Fund exists, as most readers of the ROYAL know, to send City children to the country in the summer time. A shilling pays for a day's holiday for one child. £10 10s. pays for a party of 200, with necessary attendants, and 12s. 6d. sends a child to the country for a fortnight. All working expenses are borne by the promoters, and the whole of the money subscribed directly benefits the children. Please send subscriptions to the Hon. Sec. F.A.F., care of THE ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Gladys Cooper

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Photo *Fenlaham & Barfield.*

Busy as Miss Cooper is, she always manages to have a romp with her children every day, and declares she wouldn't miss it for anything.

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MY KIDDIES

By Gladys Cooper

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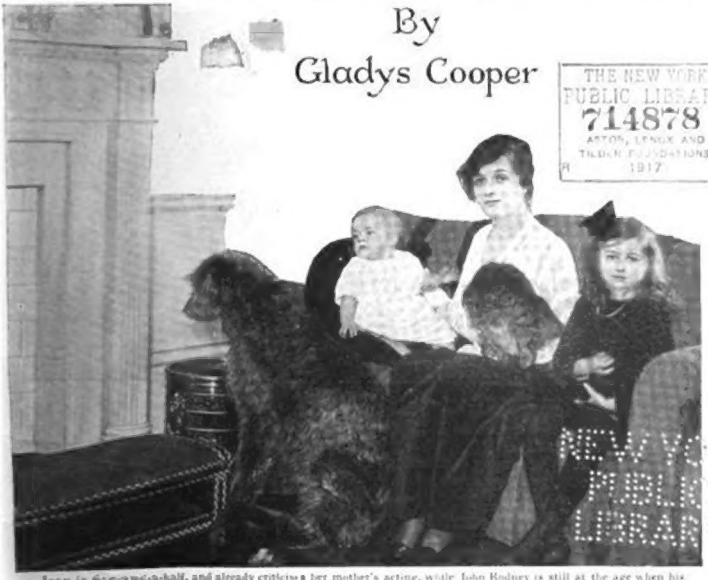

Joan is five-and-a-half, and already criticises her mother's acting, while John Rodney is still at the age when his chief joy is to drop things so as to hear the bang.

Miss Gladys Cooper, the beautiful and talented young actress, who in private life is Mrs. Herbert Buckmaster, is the proud mother of two bonny children. In the following article, illustrated from photographs specially taken by Messrs. Foulsham & Banfield, she chronicles the doings of these fortunate little people.

PLEASE let me introduce them to begin with. They are Joan, aged five and a-half, and John Rodney, who, when this is published, will be nine months old. Nine months is a most fascinating age, though no man can ever realise it. Every woman knows that the human race is at its best when it is nine months old, all soft and giggling. Men, again, have no idea how babies giggle and what enormous jokes they enjoy and share with their mothers and nurses. Poor men!

I'm afraid many people think one can't be on the stage and see a great deal of one's kiddies at the same time, but this is a mistake. However busy I am, I always manage to have a glorious game in the nursery, and I wouldn't miss it for anything. I find the days get fuller and fuller as the war lasts longer, for there are all kinds of war schemes whose promoters look to people on the stage for a helping hand, and, naturally, get it, but the nursery must never be neglected. Children grow up so terribly

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Joan feels quite sure she will be a great actress some day. She already produces small plays of her own, and is always ready to join in her mother's songs.

quickly nowadays that I should soon be a perfect stranger to my own son and daughter if we didn't meet for a day.

Joan, of course, is becoming even now a stage and self-possessed young person. Long ago she began to criticise her mother's acting. I suppose nobody can be a heroine to her own child, but the comments of the young are very candid sometimes.

On the other hand, she is merciful in her strength occasionally. On the day when *Please Help Emily* was produced at The Playhouse I got the usual attack of nerves,

John's first photograph was taken at the early age of ten hours, and he has gone on being photographed ever since, so that cameras hold no terrors for him.

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and finally lay down to rest before the fateful first night. Joan wanted to know, of course, what all the fuss was about and why. I explained that if people didn't clap and say how good the play was, and how magnificently everybody was acting, we should all be very unhappy.

"Don't worry, mummie; when I come and see it I'll clap whether I like it or not!" said Joan.

Of course, Joan feels very elder-sisterly towards her little brother, and loves to assist at his bath, which John Rodney, like a true British babe, adores.

She loves the seaside above all things in the world and is never so happy as when she is living at Frinton, where we sometimes escape from the world of theatres and live peaceful, sand-pie-making, sea-bathing lives. Joan generally stays there all the summer, and it is the spot where John Rodney was born. I hope the Zeppelins will spare it for us next summer!

Of course, Joan is enraptured over her small brother, and seeing her advanced age—compared with his, at

John is a cheerful little soul, and regards life as a great joke, though at present his conversation is somewhat limited.

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Miss Gladys Cooper on the doorstep of her beautiful home, which she presides over with all the charm that makes her so popular on the stage.

any rate—feels very elder-sisterly and responsible. She even gives advice on his upbringing now and then.

One day, when nurse was trying to soothe the irritable John—not that he's a cross person, but we all have our moods—Joan, after looking at her angry relative in silent horror for some moments, said at last:

"Nannie, don't you think you'd better smack John? People nowadays are so silly over babies; they don't smack them half enough!"

And once when Joan wanted Nurse to do something for her and Nurse explained she must look after the baby first, Joan replied firmly:

"That's all very well, Nannie, but 'ladies first,' you know!"

Although she is a cheerful young person on the whole, I once heard the sounds of terrible wrath coming from the nursery. It was Joan trying to get her own way—in vain. Then came the climax.

"Nannie!" stormed Joan. "You're—you're—you're——"

There didn't seem to be a word bad enough, but Joan managed it at last.

"——You're worse than the Germans!" she ended triumphantly.

A propos of the enemy, someone happened to say some time back that it was the Kaiser's birthday.

"I don't care if it is," observed Joan. "*I* shan't send him anything."

Among Joan's toys there are certain treasures which she values out of all proportion to their original cost or their present condition. Like most small people, she generally loves toys not wisely but too well, and they have a short life, if an exciting one. I don't think any insurance company would insure their lives even at a ruinous premium.

But some of them she loves dearly, although you wouldn't think so, perhaps, if you saw the way she bangs them about. There is one particular beast without which she can never go to sleep. His name is Reggie, and he is a monkey of no known species, but cheerful in spite of his face.

Reggie is really a sort of consolation prize; he caught Joan's heart on the rebound, for it was Charlie she really loved. Charlie was a Teddy Bear, and she adored him. His end always appears to me very sad. Joan caught scarlet fever, and all through her illness Charlie comforted her.

When she got well she went down to Frinton, and, strangely enough, she couldn't find Charlie anywhere before she went. It was a terrible blow. As a matter of fact, poor Charlie had been burnt, because, naturally, he was very infectious.

I tried to replace him, but I'm afraid he was made in Germany before the war, and he couldn't be duplicated anywhere. So, in despair, I bought Reggie and sent him down

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to Joan in a box full of her things, and wrote saying that Charlie was unavoidably detained somewhere, but his little brother Reggie had come instead, and Charlie hoped she would love Reggie as much as she had loved him. Joan did, in a very short time.

Peace be to Charlie's ashes!

Joan's brother has just reached the age when one's sole delight is to drop things in order to hear the crash. He will sit on my knee with a smile of rapture, dropping a rattle or anything else noisy as fast as I can pick it up and give it to him to drop again. Sometimes I wonder if he will be in the Royal Flying Corps some day, and drop bombs.

He is rather a dear, and has two teeth at the moment of writing. He can't talk, but he crawls at a terrific pace, and his record from one end of his crawling mat to the other is so remarkable that I shan't tell you what it is, because you wouldn't believe me if I did. He is a very fierce baby, too, sometimes, and hunts the wild beasts on the mat in question, hitting them savage blows and growling horribly.

John weighs twenty-four pounds at present, and has blue eyes. His hair is very soft and silky, and it is fair in colour. One of his great stunts is to seize his sister's locks or mine, if he can get at them, and pull away merrily. I'm afraid John doesn't know how strong he is.

A certain man once came to see us, and insisted on being taken to the nursery. There he asked permission to hold John, and John was very pleased. He likes men to hold him because they are strong things and can throw a baby up to the ceiling very nearly.

Unfortunately, John managed to grab a lock of his guest's hair, and pulled hard. Women are supposed to bear pain better than men, and I believe it's true, for that particular man said a word quite strange in John's nursery and put him down hastily. John was *so* amused.

He is a brave, sturdy infant, and fears no photographers, even when they use that alarming magnesium powder for indoor work which goes off with a "*pff*" and a flash like lightning, and makes Joan jump. His first photograph was taken when he was ten hours old, and he has gone on being photographed ever since.

The little hair-pulling anecdote about John reminds me of something Joan said when a male visitor arrived who has fair hair with a wave in it.

"Mother," asked Joan after he had gone, "why has Mr. —— got all those *tucks* in his hair?"

Joan feels quite sure she will be a great actress some day. Already she produces small plays of her own, invariably casting herself for the leading part, and all her friends for the others. She adores *Peter Pan* and goes to see him regularly.

Miss Cooper is devoted to dogs and loves nothing better than to snatch a quiet hour in company with the script of a play and her faithful deerhound, Diana

Why Not Women Curates?

By Horatio Bottomley

Probably no living writer exercises a wider influence than Mr. Horatio Bottomley. In the following article he throws down a challenge to the Church by suggesting that women should replace curates and free them for the firing line. It is estimated that there are between thirty and forty thousand men of military age who might thus be freed for active service.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley, who urges that women should "mount the pulpits while the curates man the guns."

When I was a young man I remember a phrase that was knocked about all the social circles of my youth, much as a ball is knocked backwards and forwards across a tennis lawn. The phrase was composed of four words: "The Emancipation of Woman." I am not going to say that it meant much for me at the time, but, if I remember rightly, I liked to play with it—a young man likes to play with phrases just as a child likes to play with fire.

The Waking of Womanhood.

At that time there were some very remarkable women in our country. They stood like a flaming light against the turgid background of our public life, and their personality symbolised much for which womanhood was yearning, and striving rather blindly. Annie Besant was one of them. Looking back over a quarter of a century, I call up to my mind the image of the badly-lit, squalid hall in a prosaic region of London where this remarkable woman spoke as the priestess of science. What a beautiful and attractive and irresistible creature she was then—with her dark hair and those eyes with their unfathomable depths of emotion and thought!

The echo of her cult comes down to us to-day through the barrier of many dark years and the lurid fires of the great war that have obliterated so much which we once thought important. Irish by origin though English by birth, she had been brought up as a member of the Church, in the learning of the schools—oh, those schools, with their text-books, their routine, their passion for minor facts and their emptiness of humanity!

But there was one flowering branch on the tree of knowledge of which the schools had not even given her an inkling. It was the branch of human nature and human life—the branch of the red rose and the white rose, the branch of roses and thorns.

The Need for Enlightenment.

I remember her drawing a vivid picture, both pathetic and instructive, of the state of child-like ignorance in which she still remained when she took to herself all the terrific responsibilities of married life, and I remember well her strong and stirring plea against the girls of a future England being brought up in a like ignorance; and all this time the women of Britain were muttering over their teacups about "emancipation!"

Many women began to take a hand in what they called a "movement." They asked for a franker place in life—for a fuller share of the joys of life. A spirit of restlessness and fretfulness stirred and ruffled the calm womanhood of our country. And it was a spirit that was moving abroad about the world.

Another set of women interpreted the ferment of their sex in a fashion that is not uncommon among persons of ill-balanced intellect who wish to express high emotions and passionate feelings. In short, they proceeded to make themselves ridiculous. They excursioned up and down the dirtiest roads of the country on bicycles, in costumes which they were pleased to call rational, although to anybody of common-sense anything so utterly ugly and out of place must perforce be irrational. But the Bloomerists found that they had made a "bloomer." They discarded their rational costumes and started chattering about something else. The something else was called a Vote. And so things went on—till we reached the high-water mark of Suffragette agitation.

Wisdom Born of the War.

You know the rest. Like many another illusion of the Kaiser, when the war came, he found that, after all, woman is woman—God bless her!—and that in the final trial she is happy to live for men who are happy to die for her. And so the "sex war" ended.

Yet, as I look back over all the turbulent events of those dead years, I still see Annie Besant towering over all her sisters. For she is to-day a great priestess; what matters it that her creed is called Theosophy? She is a preacher—and that fact has set me thinking. I want to know why other women cannot preach whilst the men do the fighting.

A little while ago I picked a bone with the Bishops, and to-day I demand a further audience of the Princes of the Church. This time I am armed with a practical suggestion. I propose that young and active curates shall be set free to join the Colours, and that in their absence the duties of their sacred office shall be discharged by women. And why not? The "onus of proof," as the lawyers say, rests upon those who oppose my suggestion. It is for them to show that the expedient I propose—a simple and natural one—is unwise, impracticable or unseemly.

Women in the Pulpit. Why Not?

It is admitted on all hands that at this critical moment we need every man we can muster for the expansion of our fighting reserves, and consequently wherever women can replace men, without damage to any vital national interest, their services should be welcomed eagerly. Women in the counting-house, women in the factory, women in the shop, women as chauffeurs, as postmen, as munitioners and doctors, are rendering splendid service. Why not women as curates—women in the pulpit? An it please you, my Lord Bishop, why not?

The episcopal embargo upon the enlistment of the clergy does not proceed from a conviction that war is a sinful pursuit, or that the khaki of the King is an unseemly garb for the sacred person of a priest. Not so long ago the Bishops were ready to bless the banners of our Armies, and to-day they breathe their benedictions on the cause of the Allies. Most of them would agree in their hearts with Father Vaughan that the supreme duty of the moment is to "Keep on killing Germans." They do not believe—they cannot believe—that the soul of a man can be sullied by complete consecration to the patriotic ideal. Their fear is, however, that if the clergy are permitted to enlist, the spiritual welfare of the nation will suffer; while the shepherds are away the flocks will go untended. Without the curates there can be no effective "cure" of souls. In a word, the ministry of the Church is vital to the national life, and, in existing circumstances, the clergy are indispensable.

Set the Young Clergy Free!

I am not going to controvert this view. In the first place, I do not want to be rude to anybody, and, in the second, it contains a measure of truth. The offices of religion

are never to be wholly despised—least of all, at this crisis of human experience; and the *rôle* of the Churches in the life of the nation is by no means a negligible one. I want the Churches to remain open. I want the "consolations" of religion to be freely at the call of those whom they console. But at the same time I want the young clergy to be free to follow the instincts of patriotism. I see no contradiction in these demands. I believe we can have it both ways. My proposal seems to cover the ground. Let women tend the altars while the clergy defend them. Let women mount the pulpits while the curates man the guns. While the parsons handle the mortars let the "parsonettes" don the mortar boards—and so on to the Glory of God, and the honour of the Church.

No Valid Objection.

And now, my honest critics, what have you to say? Is there any department of pastoral duty for which by nature or temperament women are unfitted? Are you going to tell me that their sermons will be prosier or their intonations less musical than those of the male curates? Shall we be baptised less effectively, married less securely, or buried less comfortably if women are invested with the stole and surplice? Always assuming that the Vicars and the Rectors were not available, you know there is no valid objection to my scheme—no man who has ever watched a curate at a christening can for a moment doubt its wisdom, not to speak of its humanity.

The marriage service gabbled by a masculine tongue is apt to be singularly unimpressive, but on the lips of a cultured woman its stately liturgy would acquire new solemnity and added sweetness. And at the last, by the side of an open grave, what fuller medium of consolation and hope than the soft caressing accents of a woman's voice? Do you know why the "stage curate" is made to cut a ridiculous figure? Do you wonder why the assistant clergy—good manly fellows as many of them are—have become a byword for effeminacy?

Strike Off their Fetters!

It is because a large part of their time is given up to work which would be better done by women. I want to emancipate them, to strike the fetters from their manhood, to call them to nobler service. For the duration of the war, I want women to run the mothers' meetings; to kiss the babies, to manage the coal and blanket clubs; to preach to us and to pray for us; to "church" the mothers and to comfort the fathers; to cheer the widows and the fatherless; to keep bright the home and altar fires—while the curates snipe the Germans, as Spurgeon smoked his pipe, "To the Glory of God."

I believe the scheme would be quite workable and eminently successful. I believe there would be larger congregations, more generous offertories, and a healthier tone in parochial affairs. And we should no longer be crucifying the patriotism of men who in the blood-drenched fields of Flanders see the altar plains of God.

Away with Precedent!

I expect to be told that I am asking too much; that my proposals are revolutionary, and that the Church of the centuries cannot be hurried along the path of innovation. There is no precedent for the admission of woman to the priesthood—and I know the parsons are almost as fond of precedents as the lawyers.

Thus, when we break new ground, we must go warily. But if we cannot have priestesses in full canonical dignity, why shouldn't we have deaconesses for the period of the war? Let suitable women be ordained, as the men have been, in the words of the Book of Common Prayer "to assist the priest in Divine Service, and specially when he ministereth the Holy Communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof, and to read the Holy Scriptures and Homilies in the Church, and to instruct the youth in the Catechism; in the absence of the priest to baptize infants . . . to search for the sick, poor, and impotent people of the Parish . . . that they may be relieved with alms."

Within the Scope of Woman.

Is there anything here which is beyond the power of a woman or unsuited to her nature? To help with the Communion service, to teach the children, to read the Bible, to christen the babies, to visit the sick, and to disburse charity—are these the kind of duties which ought to detain strong men at home while the fate of Empire trembles in the balance, and the cry of Freedom's martyrs scales the firmament of God? Can anyone claim that there is work here which only men can perform? Is it not certain that at the first call hundreds of refined and gentle women would be found ready to discharge such tasks not only "gladly and willingly" as the Rubric prescribes, but with intense joy in the

knowledge that by their devoted service a soldier was set free?

A True Sister of Mercy.

I am in love with my dream of the lady curate. I fancy I see her, a true Sister of Mercy, flitting about some busy parish, scattering words of comfort and council by the way; smoothing the pillows of the sick and binding up hearts that are broken. I know she is saying things that only a woman can say, and laying balm to wounds that only a woman's touch could salve. I see her knocking for admittance at doors which no man dare approach.

I see the children playing round her skirts, and am reminded of a Bible story that we all loved once. I look again, and see her in the pulpit, in a garb which for the first time adorns the wearer. Tired men and war-worn women hang upon her messages, which seem to have been drawn, not from books, but from the deep places of the human heart.

A Soldier Freed for Service.

And I know that because the woman is there, in a place which is so obviously the right one, some clean-limbed, athletic young Englishman is putting into the great game of war all the muscle and mettle and grit which once made him a useful man in the cricket-field, on the river, or in the college football team. And, knowing this, I am glad we have let him go. I fancy that if I were a Bishop I should be content.

THE BAND.

Oh, I love a grand orchestra, and a barrel organ too,
I can thrill to wild Tchaikowsky, or a ragtime shuffle-crawl,
And I revel in the opera, as well as the revue,
But there's just one kind of harmony I love the best of all—
You can search the world of music, but there's nothing half so grand
As the blaring and the banging of a military band!

When the big drum thumps and thunders, and the side-drums all join in,
And the fife shrills sweet and clearly to the steady tramp of feet,
Oh, it's not the tune that matters, 'mid the clatter and the din,
It's the spirit of the Army that is stirring in the street:
And it sets my pulses leaping, and it makes me want to cry,
That cheerful, haunting lilting as the boys go swinging by.

For it's not the march by Sousa, nor the wail of "Auld Lang Syne"—
Whether grave or gay the music, you can always hear the note
That is marching England onward—neither human nor divine,
But a sweet and awful blending—and a catching at the throat
Sends a sob into your cheering and a tremor to your hand,
As you wave "good luck" to Tommy when he passes with the band.

Anne Page

Patricia, whose proposal excited so much comment.

PATRICIA'S PROPOSAL

And What People Said About It.

By Owen Oliver.

What Her Father Said.

Where's your mother, Lucy? No, you needn't call her. I'll go upstairs. Can I come in, Bess? What's brought me home so early? I wanted to speak to you about something. Grayson called at my office this morning. I thought it was just to say good-bye, but he had another object; an astounding object. Where are my eyes? Well, they're generally in *your* head, my dear, but I think this time something has escaped them. You *expected* a proposal! Lucy! It isn't Lucy he wants to propose to. It's Patricia. I said Patricia. Oh, no! There's no mistake. Well, he wants to marry the childish child, the irresponsible creature, the wild tom-boy, or whatever you like to call her. Grayson is a man who knows what he wants, and he's very clear that he wants our little girl.

What did I say to him? I was so startled that I don't remember my exact words. In effect I told him that I could have no possible objection to him as a son-in-law, but that I hadn't the least idea of Patricia's views on the subject, and I didn't suppose she had any yet, and I thought he'd be more likely to frighten her than win her by speaking to her now. I told him I considered her too young to be engaged, or to know her own mind; and if I were he, I'd leave matters on the friendly footing—Pat is very good friends with him, you know—till he came back from abroad. Picture post-cards and all that sort of thing.

However, he stuck to it that she wasn't such a baby as I thought, and he wouldn't frighten her, only ask for a chance of being something more than a chum. So I had to say he could use his own discretion in the matter. I gather that he's taking her up the river this afternoon, and I suppose he'll speak to her. Of course, it would be a capital thing to get one of our girls settled so well. He's a real good chap, as well as a rich one. But I wish it had been Lucy. She would be far more suitable.

Tut-tut! I daresay I *am* an idiot, my dear. It's what you meant, if you didn't say it! But I have glimmerings of sense. If I'd wired to you, you'd have spent the morning impressing on Patricia what an excellent match it was, and all that sort of thing; and, as Patricia's natural bent is to do the exact opposite to what she is advised, she would certainly have refused him. Yes, I daresay she will now, but I'm not *quite* sure. She seems to look upon him as a sort of pal, you know. When

you come to think of it, she's run about with him a lot.

My dear, I haven't the slightest doubt that, if such a thing had entered your head, you'd have shut her up in the nursery, but I also haven't the slightest doubt that, if Patricia had wanted to talk to him, she'd have got out of the window and climbed down the ivy! My fault for spoiling her. Umph! I don't admit that she's spoilt. She's very like her mother at her age!

Her Father, who considered her "too young to be engaged," but was won over by her lover.

A disappointment to Lucy Umph! You really think so? I've no doubt you could have kept him from proposing to Patricia, but you couldn't have made him marry Lucy, you know! Yes, I daresay the child *will* refuse him. If she doesn't want him, she'd better. I quite agree that mothers and fathers are better judges than their children, but some children can't see it. You couldn't; and Pat can't. Oh, *I* can understand what he sees in her! To think of anyone proposing to our mad little Pat!

What Her Mother Said.

Lucy, I want to speak to you. Your father has just been telling me something that surprises and disturbs me very much. I am afraid that it will annoy you, too. It is about Mr. Grayson.

It seems that he called at your father's office this morning, and—of course, he's been here a great deal lately, and I confess I thought—well, you know what I thought, because I felt it my duty to point out that he was very eligible, and that your father had never been able to save very much, and naturally we should wish to see our children comfortably settled.

I do not mean that money is everything, or that I would wish to force my children's inclinations. You might remind me that I married a poor man myself. I do not say that I would undo it, Lucy; only I should have had an easier life, if your father had been rich. Ah, my dear, I've felt the pinch! Well, that's nothing to do with it. Grayson is a nice fellow, as well as rich, and if you and he had liked each other I should have been very pleased. I certainly thought that he came here to see *you*. It seems that I was mistaken. It is Patricia!

It's like you to say that you are glad, Lucy. You never think of yourself. Of course, if Patricia accepted him, it would be something to have *one* of you settled. It has been a harder struggle than you know, my dear. But the foolish girl won't give a thought to his solid qualities and comfortable position. She'll probably laugh in his face, and tell him he's much too old. Unless she likes him? Easy to like? Lucy? Did *you?*

What Sister Lucy Said.

Not in that way, mother. Oh, no! Yes, yes, I'm sure; very sure. I think he is one of the best fellows I have met, and quite the cleverest, but I did not want to marry him. I *didn't*, mother.

I didn't say that I *wouldn't* have, but—— You see, mother, it was like this. I did know what a struggle it was for you and

Her Mother, who thought Patricia would say "No."

father, and that you wanted me to marry him, and, if I did, I could do such a lot for you all. So I tried to like him. It was very easy to like him, but it wasn't easy to do more; not easy to me, because—— Yes. There is somebody else. Somebody else is very poor. George Brookes. He never asked me, but I think he would have, if I had let him. You see we've always been friends since I was such a little girl. I don't think I knew that I *loved* him—I do, mother—till I thought of marrying someone else; I don't think George knew till he thought I might. He looks so pale lately. I might have screwed my courage up to Mr. Grayson, but I'll never screw it up now, mother! If George asks me—I expect he won't now—I'll have to disappoint you. *You* married a poor man, you know. I expect grandmother was disappointed, wasn't she? I'm glad you aren't angry.

Yes, I think it's a pity he's going to propose to Patricia now. She's so young and wild. She's splendid in some things, mother; so upright and so loyal; and so very fond of people when she *is* fond of them. I believe if he waited, she might easily grow fond of him in that way. She looks upon him as her particular comrade, and she's quite jealous of his taking notice of anyone else, but as for being in love, I don't think Pat understands the word!

Sister Lucy, who was afraid Patricia regarded Jack as a pal, and not as a lover.

She won't laugh at him. Pat is more of a woman than you realise. You know she's nearly eighteen, though she seems so young; and she talks to me very sensibly sometimes; and when she stops to think she's very thoughtful. She'll be very, very sorry, and very nice to him, if she refuses him, as she will. If he came back in a year or two and asked her again, I think very likely she'd say "yes," then; but he won't. He's not the sort of man to ask twice. I shouldn't have thought he was the sort to ask once unless he was pretty sure.

I am afraid Pat has unintentionally misled him. She never makes any secret of liking him. In fact, she rather appropriates him.

I believe she asked him to take her up the river this afternoon, for example. He may think that things like that show that she is in love with him, but, to anyone who knows her, they show that she hasn't a notion of such a thing! The pity of it is that I believe she *will* like him after she has refused him. Oh, mother! I am so glad for myself, and so sorry about him and Pat!

What Her Aunt Sarah Said.

Patricia! Pooh! You needn't worry about Patricia. She can take care of herself. *I've* watched her. She's simply thrown herself at his head.

Thoughtlessness? Don't tell me! She thinks a precious sight more than some of you, and always has since she could stand alone. Patricia's thoughtlessness never prevented her getting her own way! And when she led Will into mischief, she generally got off scot-free, and he had all the blame for it. If a boy is to be allowed to speak to his aunt in that way, I'll hold my tongue. I'd better? *You* speak to your aunt like that, Lucy! Don't "dear" me! I never said that *she* put the blame on him; only that other people did; but Master Will must needs snap me up. I don't know what children are coming to nowadays.

I've no patience with you, talking as if the minx was a timid little girl, who'd be frightened to tears by a proposal. It would take more than a man to frighten *her!* She knows perfectly well that he'll propose; and she knows perfectly well what she'll say; and it won't be "no"! She wants the triumph of getting engaged while she's in her teens; and of being rich and cutting a dash. She made up her mind to do it as soon as he came here. I've watched her take possession

Aunt Sarah, who declared Patricia had flung herself at the young man's head.

of him and walk him off. I never saw anything more forward and shameless. Thoughtlessness! She deliberately laid herself out to cut out her sister, who's worth a dozen of her, and who's given way to her all her life and spoilt her. *What did you say, William?*

What Her Brother William Said.

I said "liar!" She is, mother! She is! I *shall* say it, Lucy. I won't hear Pat spoken of like that! She never did a mean thing all her life. There! You hear what Lucy says! If there's anyone in the world that Pat wouldn't be mean to, it's old Lucy. You hate her because she won't let you jump on her, like you try to do on everybody, and won't listen to spiteful gossip about her friends!

I know it's rude, mother, but you don't know what I know. It was for Lucy that Pat did it; took him off, like Aunt Sarah says. Yes, I do know she did. I shan't speak to you any more. I'm going to tell mother and Lucy.

It was I who started her on it, when Grayson came here first. It was the day after I came home for the holidays, and Pat and I walked down to the gate with him. And after he had gone I said: "I say, Pat, do you see the rotten game? They're going to gammon old Lucy into marrying that old bounder Grayson"—I didn't mean he was a bounder, really, because he's a sport—"for his money. You know the mater can talk Lou into anything; and you know who Lou's gone on?" I'm not going to give you away, Lou, so you needn't squirm! And Pat said: "Do you think I can't see? That's why I kept talking to him—to steer him off her! If I were a year or two older, I *would* keep him from her. I'd marry him myself before I'd let him have Lucy! She'd break her heart, and I shouldn't break mine! I'd break his more likely!"

I said: "Why don't you ask the mater to let you put up your hair? Then he mightn't think you're such a kid." She said: "I shan't ask. She'd only say 'No.' I shall put it up first, and ask afterwards. I can make the running better with it up, and I'm going to!" And she did; and she's got him away from Lucy, and now she—she'll go and marry him just to—to make Lucy safe, and—and—I suppose she'll be miserable. I—you think Pat doesn't feel things, but I—— That time when I was ill, she—— What are you fooling about with that handkerchief for, Lucy? You

Her brother William, who stood up for his sister, and threw new light on the situation.

don't think I'm going to blub, do you? But when I hear Pat talked of as if she—— Oh, hang it all! I'm going to row after them and try and catch them before he proposes, and, if I do, I'll stick to them like a shadow, and jolly well see that he doesn't get a chance!

George Brookes, head over heels in love with Lucy.

What George Brookes Said.

Walk down the lane, will you, Lucy? I've been waiting on the chance of seeing you. I knew you'd go to the choral this way, and I—I thought that you and Grayson—but I saw him and Patricia in a boat and—— Lucy? You aren't going to marry him, are you? Thank Heaven!

I—of course, I'm not well-off, but Mr. Smith says I'm "very promising," and they've given me quite a big rise; and if I had somebody to work for, I—I'd work till I *dropped* for her. I would, Lucy; and I—I'd be just the best that's in me, Lucy, and she would make me better. You always did. Do you remember the time you made me own up about the window? And waited in the lane howling while you thought I was getting a licking? But old Badger let me off because I owned up; and when I came and found you, you kissed me. Little girl? Won't you now? *My* little girl!

Thank goodness Grayson is such an idiot as to want that mad little Pat! Because I believe they'd have made you marry him. You're such a soft little thing, Lou. What a time that young imp will give him! Oh, *won't* she! Miss Pat knows what she's about. It makes me laugh when you all talk of her as a baby. *I've* seen some of the little innocent's flirtations! She can take care of herself better than you can, Lou. You'd let anybody impose on you. Well, I know someone who won't!

What His Mother Said.

Well, Jack, you're going to marry her—if you can. I'm not. It's rather a question of your taste than mine.

Wise old mother! Umph! What's the use of wisdom when you won't listen to it?

Well, I'll tell you the wisdom that's in her favour. You'll listen to that. *If* she marries you, it will be for yourself, and not for your money; and if she marries you for yourself—I think her naughtiness is only superficial, but you'll have a time of it at first!

There's a big "if," my dear boy. I have watched the child pretty closely, and I think your proposal will come as a great surprise. If she gives you a deliberate refusal, there's no more to be said. She is a young lady who knows her own mind, but if you only startle a "No" out of her, don't take *that* as final. I remember your father was so "previous" with me that I said "No" from sheer fright, and he just picked me up and told me that I meant "Yes"; and, when I came to consider it, I found that I did!

Ah, Jack! You're your father's son. No more wisdom, dear boy; only my blessing. Good-bye, and good luck.

My goodness! That mad little monkey as Jack's wife! But she's a straight little monkey! She won't marry him unless she's fond of him; and if she is—— Upon my word, I believe I like the naughty child, and I believe she likes me. She kisses me with a regular bang! I'm not sure that she *doesn't* like my old Jack!

What Her Lover Said.

Let's row in that creek, Pat, and have a rest. Because I want to say something to you before I go away. We've had some jolly times up the river, haven't we? And off it? I'd like to feel sure that I was coming back to them.

Why not? Well, I might come back to find that you had another chum to take you out. A chum with a better right. I mean that you are growing up, kiddie. You'll soon be eighteen. You might be engaged when I return.

It isn't nonsense, Pat. You're coming to the age when such possibilities begin, and I shall be away all that time. If I were here—— I wonder if you would try to think of me as if I were? Have you ever——

That's enough "nevers," Pat. I was afraid I'd startle you. I knew I had to risk frightening the very wild little bird away. I'm not trying to catch you now, dear little bird. I only ask you to think, when other people want you, "There's a good old chum who wants a chance; perhaps, now I'm older, I might find that I liked him better than the others, and I know he likes me very much"—Oh, *very* much, Pat!—"I'll wait and give him his chance." I fancy when I'm away, Pat, you'll find out whether your chum was more than a chum to you. I know I'm a good bit older, Pat, but that hasn't stopped our being friends.

Jack's Mother, who has a warm corner in her heart for Pat.

My dear, I know you "never, never" have faced the bigger possibility. I don't ask you to face it now; not because I don't want to go away engaged to you, but because I know that you aren't ready to answer me. I want you to take plenty of time to face the question. Try to face it without being frightened, little girl. I—— Oh, hang it! Here comes your brother. I may write to you, mayn't I? Just a chum's letters? And you'll write to me? I quite understand, Pat. Of course you don't know. Thank you. Hullo, Will! Come to help us row back? Be sure to write, Pat. *Give me my chance!*

What Patricia Said.

What a house of solemn owls! Why are you all staring at me? I haven't done anything dreadful again, have I? Well, you see, I never know what may find me out! Will was a donkey to come and disturb us. I was just working Jack up to promise to send me all sorts of things from abroad. Now I expect it will only be picture-postcards. Oh, I'm tired! But I suppose I must go up and take my things off. I think I'll go in and see Mrs. Meadows first.

* * *

Mrs. Meadows, darling, may I use your telephone? Thank you so much!

East 7-4-8-3. Is that Mr. Grayson's? I want to speak to Mr. Grayson himself. Out? Bother! Ask where he is, please. I'm Miss Benson—Miss Patricia Benson. All right! I'll hold on! Yes, Yes. Oh! Is it you, Mrs. Grayson, dear? Yes, I had an awfully nice afternoon. I hope he did. I'll ask him, if I can find him What is the club's telephone number? Thank you. Good-bye. I'd love to come with you and

Jack, who proposed to Patricia, and won her in the end.

see him off. I—don't—know. I—I expect he'll be able to tell you this evening. Yes, dear. Good-bye. I don't know if you'll be satisfied when you hear, because I don't know if you are satisfied with *me!* . . . Then it's all right! East 6-8-9. Is Mr. John Grayson at the club? Well, ask, please. Tell him that it is Miss Benson.

Oh! Is that you, Jack? I don't quite know what I want to say. You startled me nearly out of my life, and—of course I'll write to you. I did tell you that, didn't I? It really was true that I hadn't thought of it. I thought you wanted Lucy, you see. No-o. I didn't want you to want her. No, no, no! It wasn't that I minded, only I thought she might for your money, and —— If *I* did, it wouldn't be for that, you know. Oh! But I don't know that I will. No-o. I don't know that I won't either. If you had asked me a few days ago, I might have made up my mind before you went. It would have been nice to—I mean you wouldn't have worried if it had been settled, would you? I'm not at home. I'm at Mrs. Meadows'—next door—No. 23. Yes. Come there.

Wait a minute! I said I hadn't made up my mind, but—I hadn't quite, but I had very nearly; and you needn't worry, because—I think you'd better come quick!

* * * * *

Oh-h-h! Jack! I didn't say I *had* made up my mind, you know. Well, not so decidedly as that! Take a minute and make it up quite seriously? . . . Jack, I've only taken half-a-minute, because now I look at it quite seriously I do know that I like you better than anyone else, and—and—we'll be pals, too, won't we, because I did like you as a pal, Jack? And I shall be more sensible than you think, and—Oh-h-h-h! Of course I mean I'll marry you! . . . Now let's go home and surprise them all!

* * * * *

I've brought Jack in to say good-bye again. He's taking me to his mother's to dinner, because it's his last night. He'll bring me home all right. We're engaged!

CREPE-DE-CHINE.

I've heard my grandmamma declare
That, in her day,
White longcloth was the only wear,
What *would* she say
Of damsels in one-nine-sixteen,
Who nightly don (to creep between
The sheets and into slumber sink)
Pink
Crêpe-de-chine?

If grandmamma—who as a maid
Sewed longcloth seams,
In such crude garments when arrayed
Had happy dreams,
Still rosier visions should be seen
By her who uses for a screen
(Or that, at least, is what I think),
Pink
Crêpe-de-chine.

Ada Leonora Hurst.

The LETTERS of a FLAPPER

Although by the time this appears in print we shall probably be a soldier—if we can be one soldier; if not we may possibly be a platoon—we are at present a special constable (motor-cycle department). During the last Zep. raid we discovered a fair form clad in night attire fleeing down the High Street, clasping certain correspondence. Forging ourselves from our 9-h.p. Whatisit we rescued the sylph, who proved to be a flapper, and comforted her. We also obtained permission to publish the correspondence. Here is some of it.—Ed R.M.

DEAR UNCLE, May 1st, 1916.

Thank you a thousand times for the oof, or the testimonial, or, as I'd rather call it, the generous prezzy of one of England's gentlemen. You've no idea how money melts in war-time, with so many sailors and soldiers to be good to. And father's done what's known as buttoned up his pockets—if pockets had buttons—because he says hard times are coming. I say they've come already.

Your niece's silk stockings no longer suggest a builder's yard . . . on account of the number of ladders therein.

However, now you've stood by your beautiful niece in the day of adversity, I don't mind telling you that your niece's silk stockings no longer suggest a builder's yard rather than respectable hosiery, as they did previously, on account of the number of ladders therein, and I've also bought the tweakiest little hat of old-rose tagel, and one of those garments *you* don't understand, but that everybody's wearing now, with a couple of ribbon shoulder-straps and eke curious embroidery, that show dimly through the blouse and make glad the heart of man.

It's extraordinary since I've sold programmes at one of mother's Red Cross concerts, and heaven knows what at one of her sales-in-aid, what a number of sporting subs and cheerful captains I've come across who met Dick in France. He must have a vast circle of friends, uncle mine. No sooner do I mention my brother in the Ragshires than they all exclaim: "What! Is Vereker of the 108th your brother? Why, we were the greatest pals in Plug Street, or the

It's extraordinary since I've sold programmes at one of mother's Red Cross concerts . . . what a number of sporting subs and cheerful captains I've come across. [Page 19, col. 2]

Argonne," or wherever they happen to have been. Dick must have marched all over France and Flanders by now, poor boy!

You see, mother's so busy with war-work, and father with the V.T.C., that I feel I must do something to help, so I've decided to give all Dick's pals as good a time as possible. It means a terrible amount of wear and tear on one's frocks, but I don't grudge it.

Accordingly I set forth the other afternoon in my black-and-white check coat and skirt, just five or six inches above the top of the most fascinating black *cothurnes*, uncle darling, white silk stockings, and a black velvet hatlet, with Mr. Archie Carteret, of the Flying Corps. I feared a big dose of sprockets and connecting-rods and things, which seem to go to these young bird-men's heads like strong drink, but no. He ran along by my side as good as gold till we found a taxi, and hied us to Rumpelmayer's, where he sat opposite me, and sighed heavily.

"You look worried, Mr. Carteret," I said sweetly, allowing my foot just to brush his under the table. "Has the Colonel or the Flight-Commander, or whatever it is, been horrid, or did you pile her, or wasn't it in the first three?"

He smiled up, a wan and hungry smile.

"It isn't anything like that, Miss Vereker," he moaned. "I'm afraid he'll always call me Miss Vereker. He'll never know when he may call me April. "I've just realised how hard the world is for a girl who has to face it alone. It's a very sad thought."

My word, I was surprised. I can tell you. What did a child like him know about it?

"Was it someone you were—fond of?" I hazarded delicately. These poor bleeding hearts need the soft balm of girlish tact, you know.

He drank tea feverishly, scowled at the ankles of a passer-by, and said in a hoarse murmur:

"I met her at the International—the Palm Court place. She was sitting there alone, obviously waiting for someone. The minutes passed into quarters-of-an-hour, and nobody came. The waiter began to fidget, in that abominable way they have. She must have noticed, for she said to him at last, half timidly:

"'Waiter, will you—will you fetch me a Bradshaw?'

"When he had brought it she turned over the pages aimlessly. Suddenly our eyes met. I suppose I looked my sympathy, for, in some marvellously subtle way—nothing forward or anything——"

"Oh, no!" I put in. "Of course not. She was obviously a perfect lady."

"Precisely," agreed Mr. Carteret. "She had great grey eyes, a soul hungry for love, and a cabochon ring. I approached her"—he said it as if she were a German trench—"and began:

"'Pardon me, but you seem in some trouble. May I give you tea?'

"'It's awfully good of you,' she replied in

I set forth the other afternoon . . . with Mr. Archie Carteret, of the Flying Corps.

a little husky, adorable voice. Then she laughed—such a brave, jolly laugh.

"'Do you know,' she went on, 'I'm sitting here without a penny in the world, waiting for my brother!'

"'Oh!' I exclaimed.

"'Yes. He's gone to see a man who, we hope, will cash a cheque for us. You see, Jack's boat was torpedoed, and he lost all his kit, and he can't prove to the silly bank he's Jack at all. And he came all the way back from Honolulu to join up.'

"'Disgraceful!' I said. You see, Miss Vereker, I felt for that girl. She was the sort you could ask your sisters to meet."

"Ah, Mr. Carteret," replied your niece, "there aren't many of that kind about. No wonder you were touched."

"Well, I was," observed Archibald, selecting an *éclair*—his fifth, "for, to cut a long story short, she showed me the cheque which her brother had forgotten to take after all. It was printed in purple, and as purple cheques always look so pretty, and I had an odd twenty pounds on me, I cashed it. She thanked me, and after tea begged me to excuse her as she wanted to tell the good news to Jack. Also, she asked me to lunch at their hotel next day."

"And did you?" I queried, hiding a yawn behind a cream bun.

"No," drawled Mr. Carteret, suddenly waking up, and squeezing my little foot between his. "She wasn't there, and neither was the money behind the cheque. That's why I say the world's so hard on a girl facing it alone. For instance, if I were to meet that girl again, or another like her, I shouldn't cash the cheque, you see, my dear April."

Well, I never—he'd done it at last! And he took me out to lunch the day after, and we went to a revue after that, which I don't think was at all fit for Mr. Carteret to see, uncle, because it simply had a centipede nailed to the mast as far as limbs were concerned.

Going home in a taxi, after dwelling thoughtfully on my own neat (thanks to you, dear) ankles, he raised my little gloved hand to his lips, and I said it was a pity to kiss my glove, and he said p'r'aps it was.

And he behaved most beautifully to mother, whom, by chance, we met on the doorstep, and he's going to spend all his next leave with me—so he says.

Write and tell me I've been a good girl, uncle darling.

Your affectionate

APRIL.

She turned over the pages aimlessly. Suddenly our eyes met.

More Letters Next Month.

Men · Who Make · Us · Laugh ·

By Margaret Chute.

MR. WILKIE BARD.

Wilkie Bard is always a safe "draw" at any music-hall, and his quiet, sly humour has endeared him to thousands of people. He has had some funny experiences in his career—here are some of them.

Photo Campbell Gray

One of Mr. Wilkie Bard's most popular characters is that of the Cleaner, in which he hits off a typical charlady to the life.

Wilkie Bard may be summed up with entire truth as the Quiet Comedian.

He never shouts, he never raises his voice, he never forces a point. His methods are entirely gentle and quiet, his attitude suggesting that, if audiences are prepared to like him as he is, he will be very well pleased; if not, that he is sorry, but he can't be any different!

And audiences, consequently, are tickled to death by his quiet, keen humour, while his subtle, sly digs at things and people get right over the footlights, and go home to roost in the hearts of many multitudes, to whom Wilkie Bard is known as a really great comedian.

The proof of the above remarks lies in the fact that when Wilkie Bard occupies the centre of the stage, crosses his arms above his waist, turns in his toes, rocks slightly in time to the music, and sings one of his inimitable songs, you will behold an entire theatre full of people rocking in sympathy with the man with the husky, cold-in-the-head voice, "dots" of eyebrows, delicately reddened proboscis, and fascinating smile. And there you have the charm of Wilkie Bard, as nearly as words can express it.

Having thus skipped over the preliminary stages of his

appearance, which probably don't interest people at all—(I'm saying this in self-defence, because the Editor may jib at my lack of knowledge on this score)—I will now get on to the Wilkie Bard we know and love to-day, who has stated, in song and speech, thousands of times that he wants to sing in opera:

The Wilkie Bard of chorus fame, of pantomime, music-hall, and revue popularity; the Wilkie Bard of Chrysanthemums, the Night Watchman, the Fireman, the Hotel Porter, the Railway Porter, the Cleaner, the Showman, Mr. Cupid—oh, dozens and dozens of characters and songs, each as funny and clever as those preceding it.

Wilkie Bard was the pioneer of tongue-twisters and chorus songs. It struck him some years ago that audiences love to hear their own voices. So he hunted round for songs with choruses, and having found a good specimen—"Oh, oh, Capital Oh!" was one of his first ventures—he burst it on the public. I can't give you the entire chorus—a classic, believe me—but it finished up something in this style:

Oh! Oh! Capital Oh!
If you don't know the chorus,
Sing Oh—Oh—Oh!

And audiences took him at his word. They yelled and shouted, and it transpired that Mr. Bard had struck a new line of song, for a comedian. He had introduced a comic song with a *tune*, while most comic singers rely on the words only, the tune being a formless jingle of notes which no audience could sing, however hard they tried.

Now, Wilkie Bard combined melody with humour, and the result was that his value increased by leaps and bounds, and so did his popularity. Do you remember "Put Me on an Island Where the Girls are Few" (a clever parody on the melody of Mendelssohn's "Spring Song," which Mr. Bard sang at Drury Lane in pantomime, and also on the music-halls? This song, and also "I want to sing in opera," introducing a melody from

Photo Campbell Gray

Mr. Wilkie Bard's humour is of the quiet, subtle order, and he revels in such parts as that of the Showman.

Photo *Campbell Gray*

A cleverer travesty of Cupid can hardly be imagined than that with which the famous comedian has delighted so many audiences.

"Pagliacci," was really pretty, but funny, too. As for "She Sells Sea Shells on the Sea-Shore"—the mere thought of it ties one's tongue in knots!

One night, after Mr. Bard had been unusually successful in getting his audience to sing this ballad, and had noticed a man in the stalls who was singing louder than anybody, he was visited in his dressing-room by this same man, who arrived full of rage and misery, having dislocated his jaw—and demanded a doctor! The medico was swiftly found, and proceeded to put right the damage caused by Mr. Bard's tongue-twisting and jaw-dislocating, performance!

It is a well-known fact that Wilkie Bard gets some of his best effects through his clever cross-talk with a confederate in the front of the house. The idea for this work came to him in a curious way. He was singing at a provincial music-hall once, and had asked the audience to join in the chorus.

Suddenly an elderly man rose in the stalls and offered to sing the song, stating he could do it better than Mr. Bard. He proceeded to indulge in a regular argument with the comedian, and then sang the chorus.

When he sat down, the audience applauded so heartily that Mr. Bard hurried to his dressing-room, and realised he had struck a new idea.

The following night a man did precisely the same thing—but Wilkie Bard had put him there! From that day it has gone on, and Mr. Bard has had many curious adventures through his confederate.

On one occasion, soon after his "planted" man had started operations at one corner of the dress circle, another unknown individual arose at the opposite corner, and began to join in the conversation. For a minute, Wilkie Bard gazed from one to the other—hopelessly puzzled. Then they all argued together, till, at a sign from Mr. Bard, the confederate subsided, and the other gentleman was allowed to sing and talk to his heart's content.

The sequel was rather curious. When Mr. Bard reached his dressing-room, he found the interrupter waiting for him. His hand was seized, and before he could utter a sound his visitor said:

"I owe you an apology, sir! I have doubted you. I heard that you employed a confederate—and I wouldn't believe it, so I determined to test you myself. Hence my interruption to-night. I am now convinced that you do *not* employ a confederate—*for I got through it quite as well as he did!* Good-night, sir; and many apologies."

Mr. Bard murmured good-night, and did not enlighten the gentleman.

Another time, he was singing a song in which he made up, apparently, extempore

verses, suggestions being given by various confederates. If one of them asked for a verse about Nelson, Mr. Bard replied with something about Kitchener, and so on—all the verses being arranged beforehand.

The confederate every night pretended to get very angry at the comedian's failure to comply with his request, denounced him as a fraud, and caused a regular commotion and a lot of laughter.

One week a new man was engaged for this *rôle* and carefully rehearsed. Things were all right till late in the week, when there happened to be a new and zealous policeman on duty in the theatre. As soon as the confederate began to abuse Mr. Bard, this arm of the law dashed down the gangway, seized him, and bore him struggling from the building, for creating a disturbance in the show.

Of course, the song was spoilt, the curtain was rung down, and the wretched assistant arrived at the stage door covered with mud, bruises, and abuse, to complain to his employer that he "didn't know being arrested was part of the show, and he ought to have been warned beforehand!"

Have you heard Wilkie Bard's explanation of the expression "some," or rather of its origin? Let me reveal it.

Wilkie Bard, by the way, visited America a few years ago, where he was very successful, and it was during that visit he discovered the origin of "some." A typical Yankee, laconic and undemonstrative, was asked if he would care to travel to England on the *Mauretania*, the extender of this invitation never thinking it would be accepted. But it was! Shortly before the boat's departure the Yankee turned up, went below, and proceeded to be fearfully ill for several days.

When he crawled on deck someone said:
"You've been ill, haven't you?"
He replied concisely:
"I have some!"

Later he was shown some of the glories of the ocean hotel, its fittings, and so on, and when his opinion was asked he uttered just two words:
"*Some* skiff!"

After this, his attention was drawn to the Atlantic Ocean, and again two words sufficed:
"*Some creek!*"

Finally, on his arrival in England he was escorted to Woolwich, shown some of the latest armaments for battleships, including guns which could project a shell weighing a ton over a space of fifteen miles, and his opinion was breathlessly awaited. Gazing at the gun the Yankee spoke once more:

"*Some pistol!*" was his bland remark—and there you have the origin of the term "some," according to Wilkie Bard.

While he was in America Mr. Bard visited a very swagger hotel, accompanied by a friend who had looked on the wine when it was red, and was feeling the effects.

Realising at last that he ought to pull himself together, and prepare to make a dignified exit, this friend regarded Mr. Bard solemnly, made a terrific effort, and started whistling. Horrified at such a performance in such a very smart hotel, an attendant approached saying:

"Don't do that. You can't whistle in here—you know you can't!"

Mr. Bard's happy friend regarded that attendant for a few seconds; then he said:

"Don't be so silly—it's no good to say I *can't*, because I've done it! What you ought to say is I *mustn't!*"

And then they went out quickly.

Photo Campbell Comp.

Mr. Wilkie Bard as he really is in private life.

DUST of ROSE LEAVES

By Thora Stowell.

"Naught but the dust of the rose leaf remains to the heart of the seller of perfumes."

At sunset she would stand on her house-top, a tall, gracious figure, the beauty of her eyes enhanced by a liberal use of kohl.

The street was very narrow and dim. You could touch the two walls with your outspread hands. On either side stood the little open shops of the perfume sellers, their darkness made fragrant with the ghosts of long-dead flowers.

The shop of Mustapha Aly was the first on the left as you enter from the busy Mousky Street. The old man had sat there for years and years, ever since when, as a small, wise-eyed child, he had first played with the empty phials at his father's feet. Now he was very old, so that he fell asleep sometimes in the heavily-scented gloom. But as yet Allah had granted him no son to take up the business his fathers had handed on to him.

So, old man as he was, he married again, a young and very beautiful Bedouin girl, Waridah el Ghazee, a child as frail and beautiful as her namesake, the Rose.

His dwelling-house was deep in the Mousky quarter of Cairo, a tall, secret place, with carven jalousies behind which the caged birds of his harem fluttered their cramped wings. For Mustapha was rich, and so his women might not go to the open market as the

common folk did. Old Om Abdul, the negress, acted as go-between for them, and Waridah, whose free girlhood had taught her the value of all she missed, fretted in her heart for the larger world that lay outside her lattice.

At sunset she would stand on her house-top, a tall, gracious figure, the beauty of her eyes enhanced by a liberal use of kohl, her lips reddened into startling contrast with her creamy skin. Her hands were henna-stained, exquisitely kept, and great silver anklets and bangles chimed as she moved. Her dress was of scarlet silk embroidered in gold tinsel, and about her night-black hair a brilliant green handkerchief was bound in the fashion of Ancient Greece.

But, for all her charms, she sighed wearily, because there was, for her, no lover whose adoration might enhance them in her eyes. There was only old Mustapha, who bored her to death.

She would stare wearily out over the huddled panorama of roofs and minarets to where the Mokattam Hills lay—tawny lions guarding the citadel with its fairy minarets. All the brilliant panorama before her eyes, and all the passion of sunrise and moon-rise, were as ashes on her lips. For, like Eve, she had eaten of a Forbidden Tree, and no more could her idle days content her.

Old Mustapha, nodding away his life down there in the scent bazaars, hoping yet in his old age for his long-denied heir, was hateful in her eyes. Yet he loved her, after his own fashion, and it was his delight to pour out at her feet all that his heart could devise to win a smile from her lips.

But Waridah was too cunning, too thoroughly an Eastern, to betray to her lord and master, or the other women, the weariness that possessed her. When Mustapha returned at night his favourite dishes were prepared for him, and the pretty young wife was there, ready to minister to his lightest whim.

She lulled him to sleep in her arms, but when at last he slept—the horrible, stertorous sleep of age—she would creep away to the open lattice, where the myriad-throated song of the city floated up to her, and drink it in even as some thirsty wanderer at a desert spring might stoop to drain the crystal clear water.

And so it was that one night she heard the song that the flute-player made as he passed up the street, piping a strange and heart-shaking melody of enchantment and desire. The thin, reedy notes were as the very soul of the desert itself, reaching up to her with shadowy hands to draw her down to where youth and love and passionate adventure waited for her in the darkness at her feet.

She stretched out her hands, sobbing. She watched him pass, a lithe young figure, wrapped in a white burnous that covered his head and flung a shadow on his face. And he, too, lifting his head, seemed to feel her there. Perhaps he heard her call. For he stayed awhile, and his music grew

The old man had sat there for years and years . . . Now he was very old, so that he fell asleep sometimes in the heavily-scented gloom.

She would creep away to the open lattice, where the myriad-throated song of the city floated up to her. [*Page 27, col. 1.*]

sweetly mysterious and appealing, till she, far above, seemed almost to feel his arms about her, his kisses warm upon her lips. And to her homesick eyes there dawned a vision of the low tent of skins, deep hidden among drifting dead-gold sands, and a string of camels passing, indigo against a sunset sky, and a well in the oasis, crystal cold in the shade of the date palms, and Bedouin babies, rolling naked in the hot yellow sand.

Night after night he came again, towards that still hour when even this most restless of cities slumbers for a space, and at last there came a night when, Mustapha away, and her door by strange good fortune unlocked, she crept down the crooked house-stairs to a little window that gave upon the street, and there, for a blissful moment, they kissed and clung, and a full knowledge of all the sweets of life she had missed was hers.

And, after that, she knew that old Mustapha must die. He was worn out, feeble.

The days passed, and one afternoon, towards the end of the month of Chamal, which then fell in summer-time, Mustapha sat alone in his little shop in the scent bazaar, and there came to him a Bedouin, seeking a rare old perfume, made from the white desert lilies, that are as sweetly perfumed as lilac flowers, but whose fragrance is as lasting and delicate as that of attar of rose itself.

The old perfume seller, blind with sleep, fumbled among his tiny glass phials, the while a drowsy servant brought coffee in two fragile cups, that stood in filagree gilt holders on a tray of beaten brass.

They drank silently, and the water gurgled in the *sheesha* as they drew at the long pipe in turn. But for a long space neither spoke.

Then they talked sleepily of other things—the rise of the Nile, which threatened to be a high one, and ruin half the *fellaheen*; the war that British and French were waging against the Turks, God alone knew why; the murder of Hechmet Mahomed by his own Gaffir; and so eventually came a casual question from the old man as to the price the stranger would give for the tiny phial in his hand.

The Bedouin named a sum beyond which he said he could not go. The old man shook his head hopelessly, and put the phial away. This was, indeed, a very rare and subtle perfume, and the price was many times that of the paltry sum which was all the Bedouin had to offer.

They began to bargain, then, joyfully, raising their voices, gesticulating violently. Yet all their uproar failed to rouse a single one of the sheeted forms asleep in the other shops all about them.

"Brother, by the Prophet, I would give even to one guinea, English gold, for this phial," said the stranger at last, "were it but in truth the Oil of Lilies I seek. This, however, is but a weak substitute thou keepest wherewith to tempt fools of tourists in the winter-time."

"By Allah, I swear it is not so! All my life I have laboured to find this which now thou holdest, and wouldst pay but a paltry half-dollar for my secret? Nay, thou mockest, as though 'twere some cheap 'colognia' such as the Effrangis love."

"Smell it, then, thyself, oh, my father, and thou wilt see it is indeed a mistake!" and, with a grave gesture of courtesy, the stranger proffered the phial back to its

owner. But even as he did so, it fell, and was hidden for a moment by the folds of his robe. He picked it up almost instantly and gave it into the old man's hand.

Mustapha smelt it, puzzled and vexed. Long and deeply he inhaled.

"It is indeed a new perfume to me," he said—"strange, yet surely much to be desired."

"It is the Scent of Death," muttered the Bedouin grimly, as he took it from the nerveless hand. "Sleep now, brother, and may Allah and the Prophet have mercy on thy soul!"

He hid the deadly phial in his breast the while he placed the true Oil of Lilies again beside the quiet sleeper.

"Look to your master, son of a dog!" he adjured the drowsy servant crouched out in the narrow lane below them. "He sleeps now, very soundly."

"So would I, too, did fools but understand this is the hour for rest. The curse of the Prophet on you!" and Hassan rolled over again and slept, even as his master, till nigh upon the hour of the call to prayer.

But the Bedouin, with swift and quiet feet, stepped out into the sun-baked Mousky Street, and crossed into the cool shadows of the Gold and Silver Bazaar, where the jewellers display their wares, and through the delicious coolness of the shadowy Amber Bazaar to the house of Mustapha Aly, which lay beyond.

His face was deep in the shadow of his burnous, and as he walked he played a certain wicked, joyous little air that danced secretly along through the sleeping silence of the street and in at the jealously-guarded lattices of the harem.

No message came to him, but he knew she had heard and would understand that his mission had been fulfilled.

That evening they brought Mustapha Aly home, still peacefully asleep, and laid him on his own couch. The native "hakeem" called in to prescribe for him bade them let him rest and remain silently watching about him till it pleased their lord to wake.

Waridah sat at his feet, fanning him to keep the flies away, and veiling her eyes to hide the wicked light that shone there in spite of all her efforts to conceal her excitement.

And the day drew to a close and faded in a blaze of scarlet over the far-away Nile, and slowly the great African moon swung into the sky. And still Mustapha slept.

So the "hakeem" ordered music to be played, to rouse him gently. A gay thrumming and chittering of fiddles and flutes broke out, through which the passionate beat of the little native drum throbbed incessantly.

Outside, on the crooked house stairs, the hired mourning women were gathered together already, waiting ghoulishly for the instant when death might need their services.

But through all the mad jingle of melody Waridah caught at once the faint music of her lover's flute, played out there in the moonlit street.

For long hours she waited, but death was

Night after night he came again, towards that still hour when even this most restless of cities slumbers for a space.

They began to bargain, then, joyfully, raising their voices, gesticulating violently. (Page 28, col. 2.)

very slow in coming, so slow that at last she deemed it safe to take her chance of escaping from the room amid the general confusion, for a stolen interview with the shadowy musician for whom she had already dared so much.

She crept down the stairs. The mourning women had gone into the kitchen to eat their food.

Corridor and street-door were alike unguarded, and from their trysting window a long ray of moonshine stabbed the velvet darkness.

She drew him in, her heart beating like a frightened bird, and there for the first time he held her in his arms, and in the glorious moonlight drank his fill of her beauty, and, in the glowing poetry so ready at an Eastern lover's command, he whispered to her how wonderful and exquisite she was, how her dark eyes were like pearls hidden in their shells, and her skin like rubies and topaz, and her lips sweeter than honey to his lips.

But her lover was strangely reluctant to unveil his face to her, and her curiosity grew with his insistence.

At last, with a little triumphant laugh, she slipped back the hood of his burnous and turned his face to the light between her little flower-like hands.

With a stifled cry, he caught her closer, kissing her eyes as if to blind them by his love. His hold tightened on her passionately. But she strained away from him, her hands cold, her eyes wide with horror as she gazed. For his face was as the face of an Afreet (devil), scarred across and across, the nose broken and shapeless, the mouth widened to a terrible, insensate grin.

Even as they stood there, staring at each other in sudden horror of discovery, the music overhead was wiped out, as if one had raised a hand and bidden joy to cease.

Waridah tore herself from his grasp, shivering. She clung to the bars of the window, listening intently. And there fell on her ears the long, eerie death-wail of the women she should have been the first to raise:

"*Ya Kwitteese! . . . Ya kwitteese! . . .*"

Sobbing, she thrust him aside, and, with him, all her broken dreams. Blindly groping her way, she crept up through the hushed and deserted house to the room where the mourning women shrieked and wailed and tossed their arms to a pitiless Heaven in despair at the loss of so great and good and beloved a man.

And the wailing of Waridah el Ghazee for her husband is still quoted in the bazaars as a model for other and less devoted wives

With a stifled cry, he caught her closer, kissing her eyes as if to blind them by his love.

ANOTHER SPLENDID STORY OF "DONOVAN OF DOWNING STREET."

WITHIN FOUR WALLS.

Donovan of Downing Street is a King's Foreign Service Messenger, a devil-may-care cosmopolitan, to whom Europe is as familiar as Piccadilly or the Strand. The following story relates how he carried through an important mission and outwitted Germany's secret agents in Bucharest.

By
WILLIAM LE QUEUX.

HUGH DONOVAN, in his old brown velveteen coat, much rubbed at the elbows, a coat in which he took his ease when at infrequent intervals he was at home in his chambers, was lolling before his fire, seated in a deep leather armchair—one of those luxurious club-chairs which he had purchased when that exotic association called the Thousand Club had gone bankrupt. He was idling over the war-news as put forward to the public in the newspaper he held in his hand.

The gay devil-may-care cosmopolitan, who knew the world from Dover to Delhi, or from Hammerfest to Hammersmith, better than any living man, smiled as he glanced from column to column. As an official of the correct-dealing, but much-maligned Foreign Office, he was able to discriminate between the truth of the progress of our arms and the picturesque fictions as given to the Press in accordance with War Office and Admiralty instructions.

He sighed as he stretched his legs towards the fender. Then he reached out for one of

his beloved Petkoff cigarettes which he had bought in the Nevski in Petrograd only a fortnight before, lit it, and again settled to the article which whitewashed certain politicians, and told an eager public that all was going well—that the Germans were starving, and that the horrors of 1870 in Paris were merely very slight trials of the flesh as compared with those happening daily in Berlin.

Bettinson, his man, a gaunt, lame fellow, but a thoroughly trustworthy servant withal, entered, saying in his low voice:

"Captain Churston on the telephone, sir."

His master rose quickly, and passed out to the little cupboard in the hall wherein the instrument was installed.

On returning to his room the King's Foreign Service Messenger stood for a moment with his back to the fire, stretched his long arms above his head, and yawned wearily.

"Phew! Another journey, I suppose. I wonder what's up now?"

A quarter-of-an-hour later Bettinson reopened the door, admitting a grey-haired man in naval uniform, and announcing:

"Captain Churston, sir."

"Come in, old chap!" cried Donovan cheerily. "Lucky you caught me, for I was just on the point of going to dine and sleep at my sister's out at Wyvenhoe. Sit down. Have a cigar?" and he held out the big silver box to his friend.

Captain Charles Churston, D.S.O., was an old friend of Hugh Donovan's. Before the war, in the days when the popular Charlie Churston was captain of His Majesty's first-class cruiser *Tetronius*, the smartest ship in the Second Cruiser Squadron, he had often been on board, sometimes as guest in a foreign port, and once when, bearing very urgent Foreign Office dispatches, he had been a passenger by the *Tetronius* from Plymouth to Lisbon.

Charlie Churston, fine sailor that he was, had graduated from the old *Britannia* days to a D.S.O., and now held an appointment as Assistant-Director of the Intelligence Department of the Admiralty War Staff, a post which he occupied with great distinction, though compelled to curb somewhat his bluff sailor's *bonhomie* now that he sat in a square and rather cramped office, smaller than his own artistic after-cabin in the *Tetronius*.

"Jolly glad I found you, Hugh," the Captain said, as he carefully clipped the end of his cigar.

"Well?" asked Donovan. "What's the trouble?"

"A lot," was his friend's reply, his grey brows slightly knit, and his keen, clean-shaven face shrewd and alert. "I was out at Lord Chiddingford's yesterday, consulting him, and he suggested you as the only man who might be able to carry the thing through."

"Right ho! Explain away," and Hugh, taking a fresh cigarette, threw himself into the depths of his own armchair.

"Well," began the Captain, "the affair is a most important and highly confidential one. As you know, my Department gets to hear of some very curious things now and then."

"Without a doubt," laughed Hugh. "You, as Assistant-Director of the Know-all Department, must hear a lot—most of which, I suppose, is unreliable—eh?"

"A very great deal, my dear Hugh. But this matter is not one for joking, I assure you. Listen, and I'll explain as briefly as I can. First, I believe you know Bucharest—the Roumanian capital?"

Donovan smiled quietly.

"Bucharest!" he echoed. "The merriest capital in all Europe before the war. Sterlet at the Boulevard Hotel ten lei the portion—drives in those victorias with coachmen in black velvet and scarlet sashes—the prettiest dark-eyed women in all the world, except in England—shops more expensive than the Rue de la Paix, and phew! those gay suppers and dancing at the Villa Regala—once a royal park. Bucharest!" he added, slowly emitting a cloud of tobacco-smoke towards the ceiling. "I've been there thirty or forty times with dispatches, and I believe I know the place as well as I do St. James's Street. Once I played poker at the Jockey Club with the Roumanian Minister of War—a long-moustached old chap, whose name I now forget. I gave him a good run for his money, but he took a hundred-franc note out of me."

"Good! You fellows ashore always have a good time. I only wish, Hugh, that I'd had half your experience of men and things."

"Bosh! If you had had them you'd be just as infernally world-weary and *blasé* as I am to-day," declared the other with a sigh. "Well—proceed. I take it that Bucharest is the centre of this new affair, and you want me to go there—eh?"

The man in uniform nodded.

"A very nice inviting journey just now," laughed the careless cosmopolitan, as he drew heavily at his cigarette. "When the

Orient express ran from Ostend I used to do it in three days. Now, with the Hungarian, Bulgarian, Serbian, and Black Sea frontiers closed, one must go across Russia," he went on, contemplating the end of his cigarette; "Christiania, Stockholm across to Hango, in Finland, on board that old tub the *Alexandrovna*—h'm! don't I know its ghastly smells!—then rail to Petrograd, on to Moscow, south by the "snail-train" to Kharkof and on to Odessa. Afterwards on to the Danube to Galatz, Focsani, and at last—the gaieties of Bucharest!"

"Yes—a pretty tough journey, Hugh," Churston agreed. "How long would you take to reach Roumania—if you decide to go?"

"A fortnight—perhaps three weeks. I don't, of course, know the state of the railways in Russia. But I haven't yet decided to go. First, tell me what is actually the trouble."

"We'll send you over on a destroyer from Hull to Bergen," Churston remarked.

"Through the new mine field! How jolly comfortable!" Donovan laughed, but next second he settled himself to listen to the words of the Assistant-Director of Naval Intelligence.

"Briefly, the facts are these," he said. "About three years ago a clever young German engineer, employed in the Zeppelin works at Friedrichshafen, designed a new device for the steering of aeroplanes. Count Zeppelin and other aviation experts to whom the invention was submitted discarded it as being unadapted for the light aeroplanes which were at that time being built. It would, they all admitted, be of great use for heavier machines. In consequence this young man, Heinrich Grierstein, came to London and laid his plans before our people. Unfortunately, however, the latter were of the same opinion as Count Zeppelin, and eventually he was paid a fee and sent away. Now we are trying to discover his whereabouts, as it is believed that his invention means practically everything in our air-defence."

"He's in Germany, I suppose?" Donovan remarked shrewdly.

"No. We have established the fact that German secret agents discovered him when in London, and found out that he was offering the British Government the plans. While he was over here observation was kept upon him by our own people, and what they found out alarmed him. He declared that he dared not return to Germany for fear of prosecution, and sailed for New York. His movements have—after enormous difficulty—been traced, and we have discovered that in Chicago a year ago he was in love with a certain Mademoiselle Leonescu, a Roumanian singer of Tzigane songs. That lady has now returned to Bucharest, where she is still residing, and it is believed that if you could manage to see her personally you might possibly ascertain her lover's whereabouts."

Hugh was silent for several moments. He held his breath.

"I see. We want to get in touch with this Grierstein fellow again, and buy his plans. Is that so?"

"Exactly. We are ready to purchase them for practically double the price he asked previously—in fact, you have authority to go to anything up to, say, well, twenty thousand pounds without reference home."

"Pretty nice proposition," remarked Hugh, smiling and reflecting upon the tedious journey before him. "Of course, in the days when he offered this idea of his there was no suspicion of war, and heavy battle-planes and seaplanes were quite unthought of."

"Of course."

Donovan of Downing Street again remained silent. Thorough-going cosmopolitan that he was, he saw rocks ahead.

"I'm ready to set out, of course, my dear Charles, if the Chief wills it so; but who, in Heaven's name, is this Mademoiselle Leonescu?"

"Ah! That we don't know. Her Christian name is Helen, and the only information I have is that she lives in a pretty apartment facing the chief post-office, and next to a fashionable photographer's named Spirescu."

"Oh! I know Spirescu's—a big new shop. He's the Court photographer," replied Donovan quickly. "Will Sir George—our Minister to Roumania—help us?"

"No. Don't go near the Legation. You may be watched. Remember that Bucharest is just now overrun by Steinhauer's agents."

"My dear Charles," laughed the King's Foreign Service Messenger, "those persons don't worry me in the least, I assure you."

"Well—will you go?" asked Churston with a sailor's bluntness.

"Frankly, I don't at all relish the job," declared Donovan with equal openness. "This man Grierstein may still be in America, for all we know."

"No, I don't think he is. Why—you'll ask me? Well—we've been into the matter very thoroughly, and there seems more than a suspicion that, having failed to make money

out of his invention in America he—being a fellow of good appearance and plausible manners—allied himself to this dark-haired Roumanian, and became a crook."

"A crook!" echoed Donovan. "Ah! ah! Now the proposition becomes a little more interesting. Heinrich Grierstein—*alias* some thing or other, no doubt—is a crook, and his accomplice is this mademoiselle whom you mention—this singer of those gypsy songs of the Carpathians. Gad! I know those songs! I've sat and listened to the itinerant troupes in the Villa Regala at three o'clock in the morning!" And, casting back his head upon the green cushion, he added: "By Jove, Charles! You chaps who plough the seven seas haven't any idea of the fun there is on land—if you know where to go and look for it."

"Then you'll really make the journey—eh?"

Hugh Donovan nodded assent, but said:

"I must go down to Wyvenhoe to-night. I've promised to meet somebody down at my sister's!"

"Somebody who lived in Berlin till war broke out—eh?" laughed his visitor. "Ah! I quite understand, my dear boy. Right! When will you be back?"

"Monday afternoon. I'm going to golf over the week-end."

"If you'll leave London for Hull by the 5.45 train from King's Cross on Monday I'll order the destroyer to sail from Hull at midnight. I've arranged all with Lord Chiddingford. Is that a bargain, Hugh? Remember, you are the only man who can help us out of this difficulty."

"Rotten job!" declared Donovan. "But I'll try and get through with it."

Then, ten minutes later, his visitor rose and left.

Hugh cast away his cigarette, and with his hands clasped behind his head lay back in his chair for a long time, reflecting deeply.

"Devilish funny, that! How small the world is!" he exclaimed aloud to himself at last. "Helen Leonescu! How curious that I should be asked to go and find her—of all women on this earth. I wonder if she'll tell me anything concerning the whereabouts of this son of a German hog, Grierstein. No—I fancy not, after what has already occurred. And yet——"

He paused, and his lips curled without concluding his sentence.

Then suddenly he rose and went out. When, two hours later, he returned to Half Moon Street, he ordered Bettinson to pack his bag, and later on he descended the stairs to the taxi which his man had hailed.

As he entered the vehicle a pale-faced, dark-haired, plainly-dressed girl, who had the appearance of a worker in one of the establishments of the fashionable dressmakers in the vicinity, passed him, glancing sharply into his face for a second, at the same time overhearing him give the order to drive to St. Pancras.

She continued her walk as the taxi drove off, but as soon as the cab had disappeared round the corner she turned back again, hurriedly into Piccadilly, and was lost in the crowd.

At Wyvenhoe Hall that evening Hugh met his well-beloved Mabel Metcalfe who, with her father Sir Lionel, was a member of the merry week-end party.

Dinner—at which Hugh sat next to Mabel chatting with her, and telling her of the long roundabout journey he was about to undertake—was followed by bridge, and then, when at eleven the ladies retired, the men adjourned for billiards.

"I say, Donovan" exclaimed the ex-Ambassador to Berlin, "did I overhear that you're going to Bucharest?"

"That's so," was Hugh's cheery reply, as he busied himself in chalking a cue. "I'm crossing to Christiania in a destroyer from Hull at midnight on Monday—a confidential mission—a rotten one."

"I wish you'd take a letter for me to my old friend General Lahovary. You know him, don't you?—used to be War Minister," said the diplomat.

"Most certainly I will," replied Hugh.

"Then I'll go and write it now, before I forget it," and Sir Lionel went along to the library, returning a quarter-of-an-hour later and handing Donovan a letter which he placed in the inner pocket of his dinner-jacket.

"Right," he said. "I won't forget to deliver it."

At that moment Franks, the fat and rather pompous butler, entered, and crossing to Donovan whispered something, whereupon Hugh exclaimed:

"Take my cue for me, Sir Lionel, will you? Somebody wants to see me."

He followed Franks out, but though the others waited a full hour he did not return.

When at length the butler entered to see if they wanted anything more, Sir Lionel pounced upon him, asking:

"Franks, where has Mr. Donovan gone?"

"I don't know, sir," was the reply. "Somebody called to see him, and he ran upstairs,

changed hurriedly into a blue suit, and went out with his visitor."

"Who called to see him?"

"A young person, sir—appeared to be a lady."

"Ho! ho! Hugh's gone off with a lady in the middle of the night!" laughed one of the men. "Dear old Hugh—he's always so horribly erratic!"

"Yes," remarked Sir Lionel, much puzzled, and scenting mystery. "But it's rather strange, is it not, that he should leave us like this without a word?"

"Someone will remain up to let Mr. Donovan in, sir," the funereal Franks said in his cold, solemn tones.

And then the gathering broke up, each man going to his respective room.

Next day Hugh Donovan had not reappeared at Wyvenhoe, and, some anxiety being felt, his sister telephoned to Half Moon Street, but Bettinson replied that he had not been there. Mabel was distracted when the strange incident of the previous night was related to her by one of the guests, for it seemed very much as though Hugh had disappeared. Though it was Sunday she telephoned to the St. James's Club, to the "Junior" in Charles Street, and to the Foreign Office, but all to no avail.

Franks was bombarded with questions regarding the young woman who had called to see Donovan, but all the butler could reply was that she seemed to speak with a slight foreign accent. She was dark, good-looking, and possessed very fine black eyes. "Rather Spanish or Italian-looking," he declared.

She had, it seemed, whispered something to Donovan which had evidently caused him the greatest surprise, for he started quickly, and, showing her into the small room in the hall, closed the door and then rushed up to change his clothes.

That very fact showed he intended to go somewhere with her.

Inquiries in the village elicited the fact that a strange motor-car, a closed one, had passed through towards Wyvenhoe just about that hour, and returned, travelling in the direction of London, half-an-hour later.

That was all. Hugh Donovan had walked out into the night and mysteriously disappeared.

The fast destroyer *Lynx* lay in the Humber on Monday at midnight ready to cross to Christiania, but as no passenger arrived the Lieutenant-Commander reported the fact by wireless to Captain Churston, who, in great surprise, rang up Bettinson, and was thus told the story of Hugh's curious disappearance.

The Foreign Office and the Special Branch of Scotland Yard were already active by three o'clock that morning, but all was shrouded in mystery.

Donovan of Downing Street had walked down the stone steps of that country mansion in Hertfordshire and disappeared.

When Lord Chiddingford, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was informed next day, he sat for some time in his private room at the Foreign Office pondering seriously. He knew that Hugh Donovan had been frequently followed on his journeys by unscrupulous agents of Germany, and was wondering whether he had at last fallen into some clever trap prepared for him. So, in order to discuss that point, he telephoned to Churston, and they sat for an hour in earnest consultation.

Soon the gossip ran through the clubs that Donovan of Downing Street was missing, and within a week the mystery got into the papers. Further, there came to Sir Lionel Metcalfe a letter from a working man giving an address in Kentish Town, enclosing the letter for Bucharest which the ex-Ambassador had given to Hugh on the night of the latter's disappearance. The working man had found it in a train between the Upper Holloway Station and Junction Road.

It appeared crumpled and dirty, as though it had been opened roughly, crushed in the hand, and then flung away. The police promptly saw the man at his home in Kentish Town and discovered that the letter had been found on the day following Donovan's disappearance, but had been laid aside until its finder could make time to write to Sir Lionel—whom, by the way, he had addressed as "Mr. L. Metcalfe."

Thus the mystery of Hugh's whereabouts deepened, though, from this last fact, it would appear that he had come to London.

Mabel was, of course, inconsolable, for she had a fixed idea that something had happened to the gay, easy-going cosmopolitan she loved so well. She had a terrible foreboding that he was dead—killed by the hand of one of those many secret enemies who she knew had so often dogged his path up and down Europe. She and her father had returned to Draycott Place, and she had personally seen the head of the Special Branch at Scotland Yard, who assured her that all possible inquiry was being made, which, after all, was but very little consolation.

One afternoon, nearly three weeks after

Hugh's disappearance, while she was seated alone in the drawing-room trying to divert her apprehensions by reading, a maid entered with a note, addressed in a woman's bold hand. The girl said that there was no answer and that it had been left by a boy-messenger.

Mabel tore it open leisurely after the maid had retired, when there dropped from the envelope half of a man's visiting card—a card which had been roughly torn across in a diagonal direction.

The girl sprang to her feet, as though she had received an electric shock. Then, rushing upstairs, she unlocked her jewel-box and took from its velvet-lined bottom, beneath the trays, a similar piece of visiting-card.

She at once placed the two together. They fitted exactly!

Then, turning the card upon its blank side, she saw her lover's signature written in a firm hand across it.

One day long ago, when they were together in the Embassy in Berlin, Hugh had written across the back of his card, and, having torn it in half, had given half to her with a laugh, saying:

"If ever I happen to be in a tight corner, dearest, and cannot communicate with you, I will try and send you this missing portion of the card. When you get it you will know that there are reasons why I cannot write—and, above all, do not tell a soul that I have communicated with you."

She placed the two torn portions together on the dressing-table, and as she gazed upon them her heart beat quickly when she recollected those strange words.

Hugh Donovan was, she now knew, in some tight corner—as he had put it—and he dared not write to her.

Her first impulse was to go down to the library and explain to her father. But Hugh's words had been most emphatic. She must not tell a soul!

On that very same day, up and down the long open railway platform of Elizabethgrad, in the Russian Government of Kherson, there was walking just before noon a tall, dark-eyed, rather handsome-looking peasant, awaiting the arrival of the train to Odessa, three hundred and ten versts distant. Owing to war-disorganisation the train was already three hours late, but the peasant, as is the habit of the patient Russian who bows ever to the iron hand of uniformed officialdom, had waited, smoking cigarette after cigarette, seated alone upon a bench and leaning upon a small sack made of carpet, which evidently contained all his personal possessions.

The bearded railway officials, in their peaked caps and long grey overcoats—local notables of that flat, uninteresting Russian town, with its mean houses and domed churches—had glanced at the patient passenger and put him down as one of the hundreds of refugees who were passing to the south.

Upon the platform there had gathered a crowd of people, mostly of the unwashed, many being in sheepskins, for Elizabethgrad was the last stage of the long journey from Moscow to Odessa, over those great plains by way of Olviopol and Balta. At last the train came thundering in, and amid the excitement the patient, long-legged peasant, with his sack, entered a carriage crowded with flat-faced men in peaked caps, and women with red and black handkerchiefs tied over their heads.

"Phew!" gasped the man beneath his breath, as he threw down his sack upon the floor and, with a sigh, added in English: "Gad! When will this rotten journey end?"

Then he looked around at his fellow-passengers wearily, and, folding his arms, pretended to sink into a sleep.

His fellow-passengers chatted rapidly in the low, musical Russian tongue, and took no heed of that lonely figure, yet any member of the St. James's Club, in Piccadilly, would have recognised him as the ever-popular Donovan of Downing Street.

He was on his way to the Roumanian capital in search of that handsome singer of Tzigane songs—Mademoiselle Helen Leonescu.

Three days later, dressed in a tweed suit that was rather creased—for, with his plush Homburg hat, it had been hidden in the little sack for the past three weeks—he entered the handsome Boulevard Hotel in Bucharest, one of the most perfect and most expensive hotels in all the world.

The fat, fair-bearded hall-porter recognised him instantly, and exclaimed in French:

"Ah! M'sieur Donovan! Back here in Bucharest—eh? All your friends have gone, I fear, m'sieur. *Mon Dieu!* This terrible war! The Legations used to reside here, but now we have none—only our own military."

"Anything for me?" asked the King's Messenger.

"This telegram. It has been here about

a fortnight," and the concierge handed Donovan a blue envelope.

The man from Downing Street tore it open, and, having read it, crushed it angrily in his palm.

"Fool!" he whispered viciously to himself. "Churston ought to have been more careful. All my precautions may be upset by this! Nobody can be trusted in this city of reckless extravagance."

Hugh, after registering at the bureau, ascended to his room, washed, shaved, and then went forth into the pleasant, sunlit streets, where the shops vied with those of Paris, both in up-to-dateness and in price. There he purchased a new kit—including a smart, ready-made overcoat, a suit-case, shirts, and other things, all of which he ordered to be sent to the Boulevard Hotel.

She unlocked her jewel-box and took from its velvet-lined bottom beneath the trays a similar piece of visiting-card. She at once placed the two together. They fitted exactly.

That afternoon he sauntered round to that building of many stone columns, the head post-office, and glanced up at the windows of a certain apartment close by.

In two or three quarters in the vicinity, speaking perfect French, he made careful inquiry, but while strolling back to the hotel he, without apparent reason, turned suddenly upon his heel and hastened in the opposite direction. If the truth be told, his sharp eyes had recognised a certain man whom he had no desire to meet in Bucharest.

What sounded suspiciously like a fierce imprecation escaped his lips, but presently, taking a roundabout route, he again ascended to his room in the hotel.

"I wonder if Mabel has had my message?" he remarked to himself aloud.

Then for some time he stood at the window gazing thoughtfully down into the great animated square below, where the cabs were passing driven by men in picturesque black velvet kaftans and sashes of crimson silk.

At ten o'clock that night a rather stout maid, in a wonderful frilled cap of stiff linen,

ushered Hugh into a small, cosy, little pale-blue-and-gold salon, where a very handsome, dark-haired woman of thirty-five rose to meet him with a pleasant smile upon her lips.

She wore a low-cut gown of black crêpe-de-chine of the latest mode of Paris, while upon her white arm were two fine diamond bangles, which sparkled as she moved. Her beauty was of that type often seen in Roumania, the olive skin, the long, dark hair, and the luminous black eyes of the gypsies of the Carpathians, that wandering race whose craftmanship in filigree silver is so remarkable, and whose music is so unspeakably weird and yet so tuneful.

"Ah! Helen!" exclaimed Donovan, as he bent gallantly over the white hand of the handsome woman before him. Then he said in French: "So we are friends still—eh?"

"And pray why not, M'sieur Donovan?" she asked with feigned surprise, as she pointed to a soft divan, upon which her visitor sank among the blue silk cushions.

The Englishman knew that a difficult task lay before him. Helen Leonescu was not his friend—there were strong reasons why she should not be. Yet his quick eyes had seen that his hostess expected him, and he therefore cursed inwardly that unfortunate encounter in the afternoon.

"On the last occasion that we met, the conditions were scarcely so pleasant as to-night, eh?" remarked Donovan, purposely recalling their final meeting three years ago. "You deceived me, Mademoiselle—deceived me very badly, you'll recollect!"

The handsome woman frowned slightly and shrugged her half-bare shoulders.

"Now," he said very calmly, "I know that you and I are enemies. You and your precious friend Meyer tried to get hold of the dispatches that night on the boat from Constanza to Constantinople—and, by Gad! you very nearly had them, too! But you didn't get off quite scot free, did you, eh?" he laughed.

"Have you come here to Bucharest to reopen all that?" she asked, facing him in fierce resentment.

"Not in the least, Mademoiselle," was his reply. "I'm here to know the reason why your confounded accomplice, that scoundrel Mellini, is so constantly watching me in London? His girl was outside my house in Half Moon Street the other day, overhearing me give directions to a taxi-driver. Now, I've come here to learn what's your little game," declared the Englishman in a hard voice. "*And I mean to know!*"

The woman laughed defiantly.

"Meyer is here—I saw him to-day—and he, of course, told you of my arrival," Donovan went on. "You and your infernal crowd are pretty busy nowadays—of course, with unlimited money from Berlin. I admire your ingenuity in going to America and posing as a Tzigane singer! You had with you a young fellow named Grierstein—an aviator from Friedrichshafen. Where is he?"

"Likely that I should tell you—of all men, the whereabouts of any of my good friends," growled the woman.

"Well, I'm going to find him," replied Donovan of Downing Street firmly. "I don't want to give him away to the police—oh, no, don't think that. I really want to pay him good money."

"Pay him money!" echoed the woman Leonescu, opening her eyes widely. "What for?"

"Well, for some plans of a new steering invention for aeroplanes."

"What? To buy those plans that he once offered to your people?"

Donovan nodded, much surprised however that the woman should know of the transaction.

"Grierstein is dead," she said abruptly.

"He is not. And, moreover, before I leave here I intend to have his address from you. Now you understand perfectly my intention—eh?" he added.

"Then you don't leave here alive!" cried a man's rough voice in broken English. Instantly Donovan turned to find a big black-bearded man standing behind him, covering him with a heavy automatic pistol.

Donovan, quite unperturbed, laughed and nodded slowly.

"Ah! so this is the trap—is it?" he remarked in French to the man who was none other than Meyer, the fellow whom he had met earlier in the day. "I'm very glad I know it, m'sieur, because both you and my friend Mademoiselle will now end your unenviable careers in a really dramatic fashion," and with exquisite politeness he bowed to the woman before him.

Helen Leonescu exchanged a quick, apprehensive glance with her accomplice.

"Oh! shoot away if you wish! It will be the same. The victory remains with me," declared the Englishman quite coolly. "You are both prisoners at this moment," and he glanced at his watch. "Below Levitski, Chief of Secret Police, and his men have

Instantly Donovan turned to find a big black-bearded man standing behind him, covering him with a heavy automatic pistol.

surrounded the house. It is already ten-thirty. They are due here now. I take no risks with you, you know! So shoot away as hard as you please!"

The murderous hand of the man with the black beard dropped inertly. Donovan's *coup* was entirely unexpected.

"Ah!" said the Englishman. "Now you are, I see, ready to listen. Well, tell me where this Grierstein can be found, and I will lay no information against you. Is that a bargain?"

Then, turning to the handsome, dark-eyed woman, he went on:

"You mentioned those plans. Tell me—tell me the truth, remember, or I'll withdraw my promise of secrecy. Were those plans real, or was the whole job a put up one by your friend Steinhauer on behalf of the German Air Service so as to get Grierstein into our employ? I mean, were those plans real, or were they only specially prepared for Whitehall?"

The woman, one of the cleverest secret agents that Germany possessed, remained silent. She saw that Hugh Donovan held the trump card, yet she was disinclined to betray her employers who paid her so well.

For some moments the dead silence was unbroken save for the ticking of the clock.

"Come, answer me," demanded Donovan firmly.

At that moment there came the tramp of heavy feet, followed by a loud knocking at the door.

"The police!" gasped the man with the pistol. "Hush!"

In a second the woman's face went pale as death. Her lips blanched instantly.

"You—you've guessed aright, M'sieur Donovan!" she said in a low, hoarse voice. "It was a plot to place Gnerstein in London. The plans of the aeroplane steering gear were specially prepared. I assure you that I speak the truth. Go and see Heinrich for yourself," and she gave Donovan the address he wanted—an address in the Kalverstraat in Amsterdam.

"If you've told me a lie, Mademoiselle, then, by Heaven, you'll repent it bitterly!" he declared. Then, going to the door, he met Leviski upon the threshold and descended the stairs with him.

And as the door closed the woman clenched her hands, and through her set teeth growled fiercely:

"Once again!—once again he has escaped us!"

One afternoon, three weeks later, Donovan was back again in Half Moon Street, where Churston was seated with him. He had reported the interesting result of his inquiries in the Roumanian capital, when his friend eagerly demanded to know why he had so suddenly disappeared without a word to anyone.

"Well, it was simply this, my dear fellow," replied the easy-going cosmopolitan as, with a laugh, he reached across for one of his favourite Petkoff cigarettes. "I'm awfully sorry to have been compelled to alarm you all, but, finding that infernal spy Mellini had me under observation, I saw that to get out of England by ordinary methods might be very unsafe, and I probably would not arrive at my journey's end; or, if I did, I could not hope to succeed in carrying out my mission. So I merely arranged with a rather clever girl, the daughter of an old friend of mine, to call at Wyvenhoe and fetch me mysteriously, bringing me, at the same time, some kit I'd already bought for the purpose.

"Dressed as a workman I got up to London, purposely dropped in a railway carriage the letter Sir Lionel had given me, and with all my papers in order left for Bergen by the ordinary boat, so that while Mellini—hearing the gossip and reading the papers—believed I was missing, I was already well on my slow journey through Finland and Russia in the guise of a refugee. Helen Leonescu is a particularly clever and dangerous woman, and there was but one way—to take her by surprise. Had she been warned previously—as they no doubt would have warned her—I should never have been able to get at the truth."

And afterwards Hugh took a taxi round to Draycott Place, where, as he sat alone holding Mabel's tiny hand in his, he made the same explanation, and their lips met again in one long and rapturous caress.

(Next month Donovan of Downing Street undertakes another dangerous mission in his capacity as King's Foreign Service Messenger.)

PASS ON YOUR ROYALS!

In a recent issue we explained how the ROYAL *may be sent post free to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad, in camp, or detained as prisoners of war. The only conditions are that the copies should be clean and in good condition. You may send* ROYALS *of any age, though recent numbers are likely to be most appreciated.*

Simply hand as many copies of the ROYAL *as you can collect over the counter at any post-office. Don't wrap them up. They cannot be sent to any particular soldier or sailor, but the authorities distribute them to the very best advantage.*

A batch of magazines will insure our men many cheery hours. Won't you do your bit, and send some along?—ED. R.M.

The Afternoon "At Home"

Photo Hoyt

Lady Warwick, the author of the following charming article.

By Lady Warwick.

As one of the great hostesses of Society, Lady Warwick speaks with authority on every subject connected with entertaining. In the following article she deals with a form of entertainment which in these warlike days has been adopted very widely for helping various good causes.

Most people regard the afternoon "At Home" as a survival of Victorian days, and in a measure they are right. It was an agreeable institution enough, but survived its destiny and began to pass away when leisure became scarce. To-day when leisure does not exist save in name, it must claim some special justification to endure. For, while there is war abroad and war service at home, all the old forms of recreation are abandoned, and in these chats about manners and customs I am writing of what has been in the past, and may, perhaps, be in the future, but has little or no place in the present.

The old idea was to bring together a group of acquaintances rather than intimate friends, to give them tea, conversation, perhaps a little amusement, and then to say good-bye to the last of them in time to have a restful hour before dressing for dinner.

It was always a function arranged by women for women; men could not be expected to find the leisure or feel the interest to attend, and if there were half-a-dozen of the sterner sex in a gathering of fifty the proportion was not unsatisfactory.

Naturally enough, nobody could be enthusiastic about an entertainment of this kind, and the increasing demands upon time, the advent of the motor-car, the call of the small bridge-party, all helped to bring about its decline. A woman prefers to receive a few intimate friends for tea and a chat, rather than to gather a crowd that can hardly pretend to be amused, and so the afternoon "At Home" must meet a definite purpose.

It serves philanthropic ends—a sale of work, for example; and of late there has come a novel and entertaining fashion of giving an "At Home" to hear a lecture by some celebrated man or woman on some question of the hour or—still more customary in peace-time—on some question of scholarly interest. Lectures in French, on literature, art, or music given to a selected audience of those who can both understand and appreciate the treat provided, have been associated with the most successful gatherings.

Most hostesses keep engraved cards, in copper-plate, of course, for their "At Homes," and merely fill in the date, specifying the attraction at the lower corner of the card on the right-hand side in writing, for if they are addicted to this form of hospitality they may give a series in a season.

To make the series a success there must be something a little out of the common in the entertainment itself; it must be brief and well stage-managed. Several singers now before the public have been launched through the medium of an "At Home"; just a few connoisseurs with influence can give a gifted beginner the much-needed start, but the

hostess must either be a good judge or be well advised, for very few failures will be permitted her.

The hours of these functions are nominally four till seven, as a rule, but nobody will arrive much before five or stay long after six, so that the critical moment is shortly after five o'clock. That is why the hostess who offers music and provides a long programme is bound to find herself in difficulties, and seriously to embarrass her artists.

A woman prefers to receive a few intimate friends for tea and a chat, rather than to gather a crowd that can hardly pretend to be amused. [Page 41, col. 2.]

* * *

If she would be successful the hostess must bestir herself. She must not be content to receive her guests; she must see that they mingle and amalgamate. She will have exercised a proper discretion in sending out cards to ask those who are most likely to be pleased with what she is offering them, whether it be a celebrity of the season, a lecturer, an established musician, a beginner of great promise, a reciter, or any other entertainer.

Above all, she must be strong-minded. I have seen a really promising afternoon spoilt because the hostess could not control the conversation in the room opening into the music room where a concert was in progress or in the room opening out of it where tea was being taken. The arrangement of the reception rooms was not happy in this case. Under proper conditions the music or lecture room should be well away from all noise, and when a lecture or recital is being delivered or a song sung, the doors should be closed.

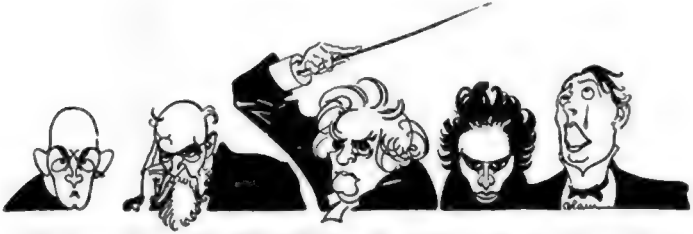
It is not fair to the entertainer to mar his or her efforts with the babble of conversation or the clatter of cups and saucers. Yet this occurs over and over again, simply for lack of a little common sense or because the hostess has allowed herself to be beguiled into a lengthy conversation with some particular friend when she ought to be dividing her favours among all her guests.

She must always remember that she is giving herself to her visitors, and that she may not, on this occasion, enjoy herself as, she hopes, they are doing. If she will bear this rule in mind she may, by applying the modern idea of the old form of hospitality, entertain quite a large number of people during the season, provide them with what they will not get elsewhere, find her house regarded as an agreeable rendezvous, and incur no large expense.

Some of the cleverest women I have known have contrived, in the face of changing customs and the calls of the open air, to fill their rooms several times in the season with people who have gone away grateful to their hostess, and of all the emotions to which modern hospitality gives rise, gratitude is, I believe, the rarest.

The hostesses could not have succeeded if they had not brought brains to their task and invited brains to enjoy the fruits of it, but it is well to remember that there is a highly intelligent group of young women in all strata of the social world to-day.

Education is better than it was and women



A wise hostess will select guests who will appreciate the entertainment she is offering them, whether it be a celebrity, a lecturer, an established musician, a reciter, or any other entertainer.

are far more ambitious than they used to be. They have been stirred in every class by the propaganda of feminism, and they are often in revolt against entertainment in which no brains have been mixed with the money. They are in touch with art, literature, music, politics. In fact, the rising generation of young women may claim to have saved the best form of afternoon "At Home" from extinction.

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Unless royalty should be present the "At Home" is free from any approach to formality, but in that case the card of invitation will have on it "to have the honour of meeting," etc., etc. Such occasions are generally philanthropic and associated with one of the houses whose reception rooms can gather up a large company. The chances of selecting guests or of inviting people with special interests is, of course, out of the question at such a time.

I should say a word about "At Home" refreshments. They are limited to the buffet tea. People have lunched and are expecting to dine, so they are not likely to be hungry. Ices and all manner of dainty sandwiches and cakes are *de rigueur;* it is hardly necessary to say that there should be China tea as well as Indian, and that both the tea and the coffee should be boiling hot at any moment when they can possibly be in request.

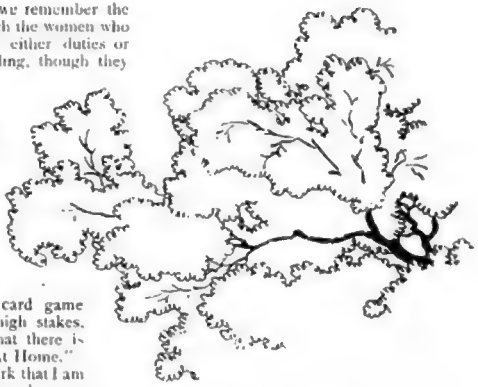
Save in the case of really big "At Homes," it is seldom necessary or advisable to have the catering done professionally. A competent staff of servants should be able to carry the work through without difficulty, and the thoughtful mistress of the house will probably arrange to lunch or dine out when she is receiving a number of visitors in the afternoon.

I am not going to say that such entertainment as I have outlined is very exciting or that it is indispensable, but it is always harmless and very often pleasant. While one can find half-an-hour or an hour round about five o'clock for a little amusement, a cup of really refreshing tea and a brief chat, there will always be a few houses on one's visiting list that will justify the effort, and the little *soupçon* of intellectuality and serious purpose

The gambling craze that has bitten so deeply into the social life of to-day has substituted some very unfortunate occupations for the harmless "At Home." [Page 44, col. 1.]

is the more pleasant when we remember the number of houses in which the women who were never troubled with either duties or ambitions are busy gambling, though they have gifts that might be far better employed.

The gambling craze that has bitten so deeply into the social life of to-day has substituted some very unfortunate occupations for the harmless "At Home." Certainly it has not improved upon it. When I think of houses where from the time lunch is over until it is time to dress for dinner a brisk card game is in progress, often for high stakes, I find myself thinking that there is much to be said for the "At Home."



Once again I would remark that I am writing of conditions before the war. Gambling is one of the vices that has become unpopular; clearly many women played for lack of something better to do.

On the other hand, if a woman, having given her morning to correspondence and home duties and seeing her evening crowded into the small hours, elects to ignore afternoon calls and get into the fresh air, I am content to applaud her and to remark that hers is a programme I have always endeavoured to follow out.

I have said that the ordinary "At Home" of true Victorian dulness has been superseded, but looking over these pages again, I fear I am not quite accurate. It still lingers in mild form and on small scale among those who have left middle age behind them, and the war has hardly affected it in the little corner of the world I have in mind.

There are quiet streets in fashionable corners of London where old dowagers who were in the prime of life when I was a girl live pleasant retired lives. They cannot venture out save on rare occasions, the pace of life has grown bewildering to them, they know nothing of a London of electric cars and tube railways and motor traction, they still believe that Lord Beaconsfield was a very good man and Mr. Gladstone a very wicked one.

So they gather to their drawing-rooms the friends and confidantes of their own era, the old ladies who in the days of their youth were models of obedience and wore crinolines, and knew no more exciting sport than croquet and archery, but on the other hand administered great estates and large houses in most skilled fashion, were to a large extent their own housekeepers and lived simple, godly lives—a little dull, that's all.

Many women, having devoted the morning to correspondence and home duties, prefer to ignore afternoon calls, and get into the fresh air in preparation for the crowded evening before them.

They talk of people who are no longer with us, and to their exclusive circle come very old

gentlemen who may be seen looking from the bay windows of St. James' and the Mall upon a world that has "gone to the dogs" since they ceased to share the burden of its administration. This old belief has been confirmed of late. Some are members of the House of Lords though they are not equal to the fatigue of attendance, others are Generals or Admirals so very, very old that they are not able to take a command and have even abandoned active criticism.

Pale shadows of the class that governed and the class that enjoyed a life that was innocent of racing, yachting, bridge, motoring, now an essential part of the social round, they keep the "At Home" alive though it will never thrive again even at their bidding. It is rather as a survival of old friendships and old-fashions that it appeals; the people who cannot adapt themselves to the ways of the young must band themselves together in self-defence. The trouble is that there are no recruits to their ranks, each year finds the numbers smaller and carries them further out of touch with the life around them, while every now and again one of the little company passes away at the inexorable bidding of extreme age.

I have often thought that there is in these gatherings the material for a charming story, for it is a circle in which many fine old-fashioned courtesies linger, but unfortunately those who are of the company cannot write and those who can write are not of the company. To many modern people the existence of this phase of social life will probably come with a sense of surprise. I have often wished that the circle closed to the novelist would open to the historian, for its members do at least know the true inner history of the times in which they played their part.

("Garden Parties" will form the subject of a delightful article by Lady Warwick in the next number.)

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES.

When the male mosquito comes
Buzzing round your ear, and hums,
Do not fear, but listen calmly to his wail—
'Tis annoying when he sings,
But his wife in silence *stings*,
For the female of the species is more deadly than the male.

When the lion's roar you hear,
Be not overwhelmed with fear—
He's all right, but peril waits you if you fail
To avoid the snarling whine
Of the feminine feline,
For the female of the species is more deadly than the male.

When a man begins to swear,
Do not let it raise your hair—
He has only torn his pocket on a nail—
But of all things, dread the smile
Which conceals a woman's guile,
For the female of the species is more deadly than the male.

J. V.

DALE'S PAYMENT

By Dell Leigh.

"By all ye will or whisper,
By all ye leave or do,
The silent, sullen peoples
Shall weigh your God and you."

I.

"Commend me to the man who can walk up against death with his eyes open and not shake like a woman."

Duncan, the mine manager, looked ineffable contempt in the direction of two men sitting at a table near by.

"I know your breed," he continued, spitting thoughtfully out of the window, "who do 'the fine thing' when they are half seas over with bad whisky; they're not much good, but downright deliberate funk beats me altogether. I have no use for chaps like that."

Stevens, a man of many years in the East, chewed his pipe-stem and said nothing. He was sorry for the lad in his gruff, surly way, and realised how long the enormity of the recent offence would take to die down.

The youth at whom these dark sayings were directed shielded himself still more with his paper. The man at his side was working, in an ominous attitude of disapproval, on a sketch plan of the new Power House, with his back half turned. The "zouk-zouk" of machinery rose from the valley below, and lizards screeched and fought in the rafters of the Mattana Club.

Hughie Dale had in the early hours of that morning emblazoned himself a coward, and a bad one at that, on the minds of some dozen of his kind, most of whom sat about him now in varying stages of undress.

He could shoot better than any of them, as battered biscuit-tins, placed in convenient niches on the open face of the mine, proved abundantly. And so, though quite the junior and new to the country, they had taken him in the quest of a nine-foot Malayan tiger, whose recent depredations in the neighbourhood, culminating in a fat baby six months old, with whom it had lollopped off into the jungle one evening, had roused the frenzied supplications of adjacent Chinese coolies, and looks of grim satisfaction on the face of every Englishman fortunate in the possession of a "smooth-bore 12" or a "paradox."

O'Malley was down with fever, and with execrable grace had lent his gun to the young 'un, "who had never seen a tiger outside the Zoo, and would probably blow his own silly head off." Hughie wished fervently he had.

By degrees the club emptied of its occupants, who departed, lamp in hand, to go on night shift or crawl exhaustedly behind their mosquito curtains.

The boy at length looked cautiously over the edge of his paper, three weeks old, and found himself alone. He strolled to the window, and, leaning on the sill, gazed vacantly down at the mine, whose workings stretched untidily along the valley beneath him.

He had been within five yards of the brute, so close that he could smell its striped, sinuous body, the acrid, musty smell of an animal which has devoured human flesh. From the end of the line he had let it pass, untouched, to crash its way snarling into the deep obscurity of the thick jungle growth in which they all stood.

Duncan, in charge of the shoot, had stepped from his cover with a face of thunder, stalked up to Hughie, glanced amazedly at his blanched face and at the shaking fingers which clutched the barrels of his fully-loaded gun, and, with a shrug of disgust, had turned on his heel and walked away to convey the news to his comrades of a man who was literally afraid to fire.

"Come on, my lad, best get to bed—no good brooding over it, you know. Besides, you're on No. 3 shaft at 7 to-morrow."

A lithe figure loomed up across the dark

compound. Stevens held his lamp high and looked keenly up at the boy leaning on the sill of the club window.

"Ten grains of quinine, too, I think, as a nightcap; you look as if you were asking for fever." He smiled. "*I* know. I was just like that when I was your age, and lost my first trout in the stream at home. A four-pounder he was, too, and I struck a *shade* too late! But I lived it down, you know—lived it down!" He chuckled, and looked up sideways sympathetically.

Dale's whole heart went out to this man, who so clearly understood the bitterness and wretchedness of his mind. He was the only one with understanding, it seemed, and Hughie longed to leap over the window-frame and clasp his hand. But he had suffered enough rebuffs in that long day, and so he merely muttered a "Thanks, old man—good-night," and went across to his lonely bungalow.

During the weeks that followed the fruitless tiger hunt, Hughie Dale went about his work mechanically, without enthusiasm, and with as little effort as possible.

But he heard Duncan one night engaging old Stevens in whispered conversation, of which there fell fragments such as:

"It's all very well, old man, you remember the trouble we had in 1909 on the Deepdown workings. Some of them are armed, too—'Colts' from Brummagem. My boy, whom I'd trust anywhere, tells me there's a lot of unrest among the tribute workers, and as likely as not they'll try the old game of smashing the dynamos, and we daren't risk that. We'll double night-shifts week after next with the senior men, and tell 'em to shoot at the first sign of trouble. There's always the trap, anyway. I'll tell Allison to have it set, if things get bad. You remember, the King"—he winked—"and serials of six." Stevens nodded, smiling.

Then Dale determined to know what was afoot, that he might not be found wanting again. Later he went up the road to the Engineer's bungalow, and found the old fellow getting into bed, and cursing his boy in a dull monotone for leaving his mosquito-nets open.

"O! all the infernal yellow scubs Chow Min's the—— Hullo, young 'un! What the blazes do *you* want?"

Then Hughie unburdened himself, with many apologies.

"Why all this quiet preparation, this looking to revolvers, this doubling of shifts at night, these anxious faces? You see," concluded the lad hesitatingly, "I mustn't—er—play the fool again, and I might be on duty at the time—or something."

"Oh! that's it, is it? You're a good lad. I always said so. Well, open those shutters when I'm inside, and you shall hear the worst."

Hughie pushed wide the wooden shutters which served as windows, and let in the pungent scent of the night. The Engineer grunted with satisfaction as he deftly closed the gauze netting round his bed, and lay complacently on his back.

Then Dale learnt much of the ways of the unfathomed Celestial—how, at the Chinese New Year, they are apt for once to throw off the mask of stolid apathy, to become at first quietly devilish, and later, when debauch has bred a temporary madness, to cast aside entirely the cloak of stoic indifference in which they face the world habitually, and to commit atrocities which for cunning and ferocity are unsurpassed in a white race.

"Yes," drawled old Stevens at length, sleepily, "it's a sort of prolonged Mafficking. And their loathing of us often takes active shape to the detriment of the Company's property and *my* machinery."

"What is the 'trap' I heard Duncan speaking about?" asked the boy.

"Oh," replied the Engineer, "you needn't bother about *that*—Allison's job, that is. We had a Malay clerk here a year or so ago whom we suspected of pilfering small sums from the safe. He worked under Allison."

Allison was the accountant.

"Being in the office, he got to know the combination; we didn't change it often enough in those days. So the boss and I together rigged up a small plant. 'William the Conqueror 1066' opens the safe door, but the moment you turn the handle you get a pretty stiff dose of electricity up your arm; you can't let go, and unless you have got the constitution of a rhinoceros the shock will probably kill you.

"Very neat we thought it, because it caught our man without a hitch, and did him serious bodily harm. Small dynamo set in the concrete behind the safe, wires running through to brass handle; quite easy."

The Engineer chuckled, and threw his pipe on the floor.

"Good-night, young 'un—it's a dog's life, isn't it?" and he turned over heavily, as one feeling suddenly the number of his years.

As bad tidings fall without warning, so did black catastrophe descend upon the Tid'Apa Development Corporation on New

Year's Eve, in the sudden failure of the water supply. This most modern of tin mines was electrically driven, and the artery which maintained its pulsing life stretched away through hill and jungle, a round, serpent-like streak of pipe-line some five miles to the westward, where a steep-banked yellow river fed sullenly its bastard iron tributary.

O'Malley, in charge that night, came sweating with the news to the men's bungalows, and Duncan swore dreadful oaths in broad Scotch as he hurried into his clothes in the pale grey of dawn.

An hour's examination in the Company's motor revealed the extent of the damage.

"Unriveted in three places," he said, when he returned later, covered in dust, "and the whole country flooded near the pipe. They must have jacked it away from the joints by concerted signal, probably torch flares—devilish clever. I've sent Slade to turn it off, of course, up top, but we can't afford to lose a minute's working this month. Where's Stevens?"

Someone fetched him.

"Look here, Steve, I must leave you in charge with one of the youngsters—I'm not trusting any of these coolies just now. This is a white man's job. Three of us will take each break, and re-rivet."

Then followed an incursion into technicalities and tools, Stevens openly doubting whether anybody but himself could do the job.

"Come on, boys," concluded the Manager; he had called a council of war in the club smoking-room. "I'll take the gear in the car; you can all follow on bicycles. O'Malley, you come with me. Here, Dale, go on duty with Stevens," and he hurried out with troubled face, his men after him.

Of the eleven Englishmen in the employ of the Tid'Apa Development Corporation, there now remained two in charge of some eighteen thousand pounds' worth of property and four hundred coolies, some of whom had the night before cut off the water—an earnest of what was to follow.

Stevens' rage at the stoppage of his precious machinery had barely subsided late that afternoon, when he sent for Dale, who was patrolling the battery sheds, to come up to the office.

The youth obeyed the summons, and found the old man poring over the site plan of the pipe-line.

"I don't like this pipe-cutting business, my lad," he said as Dale entered. "It is as clear as daylight to me. Can't understand old Duncan not tumbling to it. It's done to get us out of the way."

The same thing had occurred to Dale immediately the news had arrived, but his opinions were not asked for.

"Pretty successful, too," went on the veteran. "How much has Allison got in the safe, do you know?"

Dale happened to know because he had helped the accountant to strike a balance the previous evening.

"Four thousand dollars, roughly," said Dale. "We sold on Tuesday, you know. Why! You don't mean they'll try——"

"I don't mean anything, my boy, but that there's too much money here for my liking."

"But," interrupted Dale, "they can't open without the word."

He blushed violently.

"What's the word now?" questioned the old man, looking sharply at him.

"The Tiger Hunt 1915," answered the boy sullenly; "that's all the thanks I got for helping that swine Allison with his cast."

"Umph! I wouldn't bet against a Chinaman opening anything he put his mind to," mused the Engineer. "However, it's a nasty tangle for him," and he fingered the brass knob of the safe, which revolved slowly under his hand, exposing a kaleidoscope of letters and red figures.

"It will take several of them to do this job," he went on, tapping the safe with his finger; "one to work the door, if he can, and the others to watch for us. They're treacherous brutes even to each other. That pipe is an all-night job," and he glanced at the plan anxiously. "So I shall stay here."

"No," said Dale firmly; "this is *my* job. Much better for you to be down below."

He pointed down the hill towards Stevens' beloved machinery.

The Engineer smiled.

"Have it your own way, my lad; but you had better take one in each pocket."

He produced his own revolver.

"Take this—I'll get another on the way down—and shoot directly they come in—if they do. I shall hear you, and come up with mine—quick. See?"

Hughie nodded, and the old man stalked out into the dusk.

II.

The office, a wooden structure, twenty feet square, adjoined the Manager's bungalow. Placed on the bluff of the hill, it commanded a clear view of the mine below, so that in the

daytime those whose turn it was to work beneath its shade had the satisfaction of seeing their comrades sweltering in the open beneath them. Moreover, Duncan sometimes directed operations by telephone, and could see without moving that his orders were carried out. In times of emergency, or when the safe was full, he slept there.

When Stevens had gone, Hughie Dale sat down to review the situation.

He felt terribly alone. The wicker chair creaked suddenly with his weight, and he started violently as at a slammed door.

Black darkness was dropping swiftly from the eastern skies.

"Pit-pat, pat-pit, pat," reached the watching boy's ears. He stiffened, hand on revolver. Someone walked on bare feet close by. A coolie foreman passed the window, wiping his forehead, but did not glance inside.

Dale lit a cigarette hurriedly, and dallied absently with the match till the hot wax ran down his nail to the skin. He threw the match out of the window and stood up.

This was no time for frightened reverie, for the conjuring up of fearful possibilities. He must do something definite if his hour was at hand. He glanced about the little room. What could he do?

A cupboard in which the men hung their overalls stood against the further wall. Six feet by three—just the place. It was bored with two holes, five feet from the ground, for ventilation. He wondered why overalls required ventilation, and laughed for the first time that day. He closed and latched the shutters as usual, and locked the outer door, leaving by the door which gave access to Duncan's bungalow. Here he turned on all the lights, threw open the doors, and shouted for the Manager's boys. No answer.

The eyes of a man lying flat on his stomach in the darkness outside watched Dale's movements in the room, and the ghost of a cruel smile flickered about the corners of his mouth. Presently he turned slowly without sound, as does a cobra sliding through the grass, and made a sign with his hand. Another figure crept up noiselessly behind him. The two Chinamen lay side by side, and their whisperings were as the faint sigh of a leaf disturbed by the suspicion of a wandering breeze.

Dale turned the pages of an illustrated magazine on the table and left the room with it under his arm. The two men lying in the compound grunted with satisfaction, and stole away on bare feet.

"If there's anyone about," thought Dale, "they'll imagine I'm lying on his bed." And he went quickly and quietly into the office, locking the door behind him.

It was the rule always to leave one light on at night—a fad of Duncan's. Dale looked round, glanced at the impenetrable door of the safe, and ensconced himself in the cupboard, feeling he was grossly exaggerating the situation.

He found by crouching a little he could cover the room with one eye through the hole in the door. He patted the two trusty revolvers in his coat pockets, and, after what seemed an interminable time, he experienced an insane craving for tobacco. This was awful rot, standing here hunched up like this. Of course nothing would happen—nothing ever did on these theatrical occasions.

The little disc of light from the hole in the door was suddenly obscured. An eye was within an inch of his own! He could hear the steady breathing of its owner pulsing regularly, as it were, against his own heart.

A fit of uncontrollable anger seized Hughie, and he flung open the door.

The figure dropped flat as the door swung outwards. A hand went up, and, with a sudden jerk on his coat, Dale was flung headlong to the floor.

Three Chinamen leapt upon him, and in about seven seconds his hands were tied so tightly behind his back that it was only with a great effort that he refrained from crying out with the pain of it.

He was pulled to his feet, and leant stupidly against the office table. He had fallen heavily on the concrete floor, and was a little dazed.

A Chinaman was squatting on his haunches at the safe door. The other three, entirely undisturbed by their recent struggle, watched him, muttering in rapid Chinese to each other, occasionally glancing malevolently in Dale's direction. Both his revolvers lay on the floor, their cartridges strewn about as they had fallen when the breeches had been deftly opened.

He who was dealing with the safe door was an old man, and appeared to be the leader, for he looked round from his task occasionally and spoke as one in authority.

Hughie was amazed at this man's skilful fingering of the big knob which controlled the lettering. He held and turned it in the correct manner, as Dale had so often watched Allison do. Groups of figures and pairs of letters came upon the dial, only to disappear as quickly under his deft, dissatisfied touch.

He was working it systematically, and not as the average person does—aimlessly and clumsily.

The futility of all this, however, struck the boy suddenly, and he smiled broadly. One of the watching men looked at him, and, seeing his smile, walked quietly to the office table, picked up a flexible steel ruler that Allison used for the ledger, and cut the Englishman a hard back-handed blow with it across the face, so that the blood streamed from the deep incision of its edge.

Dale staggered back with a cry of agony.

The others turned and smiled with guttural exclamations of satisfaction, while he who had inflicted this atrocity stood before him and flicked the steel about with a perfectly expressionless face, preparatory to another blow.

The pain of the blow aroused a demoniacal rage in Dale. He rushed violently at his aggressor, but was tripped and thrown to the ground.

The man at the safe turned angrily and bade them desist. He feared noise.

As Dale lay inert, half fainting on the floor, the old man turned slowly and regarded him with a most evil smile. He tapped the knob of the safe and spoke threateningly. Then it rushed over Hughie that they were defeated; he grinned again, and lay still, looking unutterable hate at one and the

He was pulled to his feet, and leant stupidly against the office table. He had fallen heavily on the concrete floor, and was a little dazed.—

other. The old man reached out a hand, clutched the boy's ankle, and with surprising strength dragged him nearer.

He squatted on his haunches beside him. "You makee word, open door," he snarled, and there was death in his eyes as he spoke.

"I'll see you hanged first," spluttered Hughie.

The leader swept three cartridges towards him on the floor, and picked up one of Dale's revolvers, glancing under his eyebrows the while at the Englishman.

It was the number, the key of the safe, or death. One or the other. Suddenly with the word "number" there broke upon the lad a torrent of thoughts, flooding his mind as a dry cove is flooded by an incoming tide.

The number. The trap. Why not? They would at any rate get the ringleader. And in the confusion he might reach the revolver, and Stevens would be there under a minute.

What was it? Serials of 6? Ah! "William the Conqueror 1066." The words slid gently into his brain.

The old Chinaman moved nearer, clicking together the breech of the now loaded weapon.

Again the pain, and the little trickle of blood over the edge of his chin, made him go cold with anger. He leant forward and said quite clearly and deliberately: "1066. William the Conqueror 1066."

A Chinaman was squatting on his haunches at the safe door. The other three . . watched him, muttering in rapid Chinese to each other, occasionally glancing malevolently in Dale's direction. [*Page 49, col. 2.*]

but in a voice that seemed to him a long way off, and the watching Chinaman grunted.

The little old man frowned, perplexed, and jerked out a quick sentence in his own dialect, an order. Thereupon they untied Dale's hands, and thrust pencil and paper before him.

As he finished printing the word C O N-Q U E R O R, he realised suddenly what men feel when, dying, they make hasty wills. And even then a hated word, "Tiger," moved slowly across the retina of his mind. Rather dazed and giddy with a queer excitement, he added the number 1066. It was better so. At least they would know—afterwards.

They snatched at the paper, and handed it to their leader.

He looked searchingly at the boy. Dale nodded with a mocking in his heart.

The old man turned his back, and began with his destiny. As each letter appeared on the dial, a little click followed, and with the third of these Hughie experienced an overwhelming desire to scream. He bit his under-lip hard, and waited.

In a half-circle in red enamel appeared the word "Conqueror" on the dial.

Was there not also a slight purring noise as of electricity somewhere behind the huge safe?

6 . . . 6 . . . The Chinaman screamed shrilly, and wrenched at his hand.

A great weight fell suddenly upon the back of Dale's head, and he went down—down, into a well with no bottom; so dark: so steep—would he never stop falling?

III.

"Yes, I think he will pull round, poor lad. I thought they'd smashed his skull, but it is harder than I expected."

Duncan, with grave face, turned his head from rolling a bandage in a corner of his bedroom, and held up a cautioning finger, nodding to the still figure on his bed.

"How many of 'em did you collar, Steve?"

The veteran Engineer glanced anxiously through the verandah window at the swathed head on the Manager's pillow.

"Old Ah Lin got the full voltage up his right arm. His number's up." He chuckled delightedly. "We have got two of his brethren. The boys are—er—h'm—dealing with them now." He nodded in the direction of the club. "Allison says they took nothing. They had precious little time. I thought the shouting was from the boy. Lor', how that chap screamed!"

"Beats me," went on Duncan, "how he remembered the old trap. Didn't know he had been told about it."

Stevens, not replying, continued to look towards the bed

"Say, guv'nor," he asked suddenly, looking squarely at his superior, "would *you* have done that?"

"Can't tell," said the other grimly. "It takes a very brave man to do that kind of thing."

"Will you tell him so if he pulls through?" pointing with his pipe-stem to the bed.

"I will," said Duncan vehemently.

"Thanks," replied the Engineer. "I'm glad."

"Eh? What's that?" asked the Manager, looking up sharply.

Stevens smiled patiently, and gave his reasons.

A THOUGHT.

Some of us call them blouses,
And others call them *blouses;*
The difference arouses
Debate in divers houses.
One cheers, another grouses,
And still we have to choose
Whether we call them blouses
Or if we call them *blouses.*

F.

DO YOUR OWN ODD JOBS

Warnings for the Would-be Thrifty Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

BY LESBIA ROBINSON.

"Exceeding Instructions"—Mr. Bert Thomas gives us the father who, not content with painting the bath, proceeds to paint the baby.

THE ability to do odd jobs neatly and permanently is not given to everyone, and in pre-war days there were many able-bodied men who flinched before a hammer, and had never held communion with a saw. Now that the lean days are upon us, and there is a "waiting list" at every plumber's and house decorator's, even the most clumsy must gird up their loins and step into the breach.

With the advent of spring cleaning there is always an epidemic of odd jobs to be done about the house, and the unscrupulous husband will probably conjure up many excuses on which to base a claim for exemption.

This is the time when the man who has prided himself on being handy with tools is apt to regret the fatal ease with which planks turn into shelves and cupboards at his touch, and wish he had spent his evenings doing jig-saw puzzles instead of mastering the elements of carpentering. Apart from home service, the man who can look a tool-box in the face with equanimity is liable to neighbourly compulsion at any moment.

"I wonder if Mr. Handyman would mind having a look at my bathroom blind. I can't

Mr. Cottington Taylor depicts the young housewife who essays an encounter with the blinds and comes off second best.

"A Fateful Moment"—the trials of the amateur window cleaner, illustrated by Esmond.

pull it down, and it's most awkward. He's so clever—I know it won't be any trouble, or I wouldn't ask him."

This is the sort of plea which greets Mr. Handyman when, having painted the bath, planed down a too capacious door, and finished off a plate-rack, he is just settling down to a well-earned rest. And the chances are that, having restored the paralysed blind, the lady of the house will find a lock which is out of action, or some castors which have insisted on retiring from active service.

In these days of economy even more ambitious jobs are attempted by self-respecting householders, weary of scratched paint and elderly wall-paper. But painting and papering are not so simple as they appear. The paint, however carefully applied, has an unpleasant habit of looking streaky, and short of barbed wire entanglements, nothing will keep the family cat from promenading on the freshly-painted boards.

As for papering, it is only the divinely gifted who can induce the wall-paper to cling consistently to the wall, instead of making itself into impromptu blisters, or wrinkles only outdone by those on the face of a beauty advertisement lady before treatment.

There are wives who, in the face of the proven inefficiency of their husbands, insist on their undertaking jobs about the house, and live to regret it. Such a one was Mrs. Hardup, a managing lady of unattractive appearance, who held complete dominion over her unassuming husband. Mr. Hardup had essayed minor jobs on several occasions, and always with disastrous results, for he had no skill with a hammer, and his nails, unlike the German fleet, showed a frequent tendency to come out.

Mrs. Hardup required a shelf put up in the scullery where her beloved saucepans might rest when off duty, and commandeered her reluctant husband for the job. Measurements were not Mr. Hardup's strong point, and the plank he selected would have bridged the Thames, and had to be dragged

"On the Mend"—Mr. Rex. F. Smith portrays the thrifty bachelor engaged in a spirited struggle with a needle and thread.

into the garden to be cut, settling the question of exit for itself by piercing the kitchen window. It took Mr. Hardup a good hour to saw off the plank, which seemed to possess the tenacity of the British Army, and resisted his efforts at all points. But worse was to come, for the scullery wall proved to be a worthy descendant of the far-famed walls of Jericho, and crumbled away before his touch. He got the brackets fixed at last, however, though so insecurely that the shelf would have jibbed at an egg-cup, and fallen down in a faint at one of Mrs. Hardup's portly saucepans.

"The Paper Problem."—Mr. Alfred Lotte's idea of the answer of paperchain

"The Tinker's Curse."—Mr. Thomas Henry's warning to those who risk acquaintance with solder.

Finally, after disfiguring the scullery walls with ragged holes in his search after a firm foundation, Mr. Hardup emerged triumphant, and prepared to descend from the table upon which he had been standing. At the critical moment his foot slipped, he clutched wildly at the first thing that offered, which happened to be the handle of a saucepan on the gas-stove, and came ignominiously to earth amid a shower of hot pea-soup.

Taking it all round, it was an expensive shelf, for, in addition to the broken window, there was a doctor's bill for Mr. Hardup, who was laid up for a month with a scalded leg, added to which the said shelf ultimately descended on the best dinner service and blotted it out of existence beneath a regiment of saucepans.

But Mr. Hardup secured total exemption from home service, and counted the price cheap.

Mr. Starr Wood suggests that the inexperienced carpenter may easily overdo things if trusted with a saw.

Will - - Christianity Survive? -

By the Rev. R. J. Campbell.

No-one is better qualified to speak on the religious aspect of the war than the Rev. R. J. Campbell. In the following article he repudiates the suggestion that Christianity has failed, and prophesies that religion will emerge victorious after the war.

Photo Elliott & Fry, Ltd.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell, author of the following stirring article.

One subject upon which a great deal is being said and written at the present time is the relation of the Christian Church to the war and the new conditions created by the war. On the one hand we are told that the war itself proves the failure of Christianity, and on the other that it has already led to something like a religious revival.

The Attitude of Religion.

Critics of the churches storm at them for having so little comfort or guidance to give in a time of such prodigious upheaval as this, and at the same time we are receiving overwhelming testimony to the devotion of the chaplains at the front and the amazing activities of religious organisations in general in providing for the spiritual needs of the troops. Nothing of the kind has ever been attempted so thoroughly and systematically before; it is as much a new creation as our vast armies themselves. But what many people are asking is whether it will continue, and in what form?

How will religion come out of the struggle? Will Christendom repudiate its ancient faith or not? Will civilisation in the future, or what is left of it, want to have anything to do with Jesus Christ or the Church that professes to speak in His name?

Here is a composite question which we ought to be facing now, so that we may have some definite answer ready.

A Challenge to the Church.

It may be as well to say in the first place that this is a challenge addressed not so much to us as to our Lord. This should not be forgotten in any searchings of heart or confession of our own shortcomings which we may undertake. Christians, and especially the clergy, may be greatly to blame for much that the critics complain of or they may not, but the fact remains that if the Church of Christ can perish on this earth, as some even among its own adherents are fearing, the result will be the failure less of Christians than of Christ. He promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, and so far that promise has been kept, kept through

periods much more menacing and deadly so far as the spiritual well-being of mankind was concerned than the present.

Would anybody affirm that the Europe ecclesiastically governed by the Renaissance Popes, for instance, was in a better state than the present, or that religion in the western world in the dark and troublous tenth century, when human society seemed on the verge of collapsing altogether, gave hope of a better morrow than ours? Yet the Church recovered herself then, and why should we doubt her ability to do so still?

There is absolutely no comparison in the moral status of the ministry to-day with that of either of these epochs, not to speak of the Georgian era in England alone when it was only too easily possible for a drunken reprobate to hold half-a-dozen livings at once while the king made the cynical remark that half his bishops were atheists.

The Progress of the Ministry.

The Methodist revival, the Evangelical movement, and all such movements have all had their effect in raising the quality of those who follow the most sacred of all callings in our country, and different causes have operated in the same direction at intervals in other countries. With all their faults, and they have been many and grievous, this can honestly be said of the monastic orders and the Friars and Jesuits each in their generation and degree; they all breathed new life into the dry bones of the regular ministry as they successively came on the scene.

The Church has often failed locally, but never universally. She has disappeared entirely from certain parts of the world where she had established a footing for a time, and she has had the conquest to make all over again, as, most remarkably, in the case of China. The flame of spiritual fervour has again and again died down in Christendom as a whole, but has never gone out and never will, unless Christ Himself was wrong in His forecast of the future; and it is a great strength to any Christian worker to know that. After all, it does not principally rest with us and our merits to keep the flag of the faith flying; it rests with Him who gave us the commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

The Divine Guarantee.

By the "gates of hell" He must have meant the forces of evil in the world, and perhaps in other worlds too. I take it that He was thinking of all that seen or unseen is fighting against the Kingdom of Heaven. So here is one thing to be reckoned with at the outset of any inquiry as to the position and prospects of Christianity in this or any other age: our Blessed Lord and Master guaranteed that it should not fail.

Let the discouraged and apprehensive lay hold on that. It can only be proved false when the human race rejects Jesus Christ, and that is not likely to happen. For whatever may be said about His Church it seems agreed to reverence Him.

At the same time it must be admitted that there have been tendencies at work for the past generation or two which the war has brought to a head, which were and are directly and consciously opposed to Christianity as a system of belief and practice—I do not mean in regard to this or that doctrine or mode of worship or explanation of our lot, but as a moral ideal, a rule of life desirable for men to follow and by which society should be ordered and governed.

Christianity *versus* Stoicism.

In this respect the latter part of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth have witnessed a return to an early age. When Christianity first began to be a power in the world it found itself in conflict with the ideals of an ancient and elaborate civilisation, seemingly impregnable and rooted in human nature. The Christians had a certain standard of conduct to proclaim and exemplify, which was treated with great scorn by the Pagan philosophers and magistrates as being a code for women and slaves. The Stoic philosophy, for instance, whose finest but not most characteristic product was the noble emperor Marcus Aurelius, was that which perhaps best interpreted the Roman genius, the genius of those marvellous soldiers who conquered the world.

To tell a successful Roman general that he ought to love his enemies would have been tantamount to telling him that the Roman Empire ought not to exist, and he would have treated the proposition with the most utter contempt. We take for granted nowadays that the Christian law of love is the highest, whether we obey it or not, but the Roman thinker of eighteen or nineteen hundred years ago would not have done anything of the kind; he would have maintained that this was not a proper ideal to set before the mind of youth.

The Triumph of Christian Ideals.

Two moralities thus strove against each other, and in the end the Christian prevailed,

though everything seemed against it. Let me emphasise the point, it was not a contest between what everybody saw to be right and everybody knew to be wrong, but between two inconsistent views of right and wrong. The new Christian code did emphasise the more feminine qualities in human nature, the gentle, self-effacing, tender, and considerate, in opposition to the more characteristically masculine, egoistic, overbearing. It took a long time before the issue was made clear, and when the victory came—for it did come—it built a new civilisation

Men have never fully obeyed the Christian rule of life, but the enormous, the incalculable gain to humanity was the universal admission ultimately secured that this was right, this was the true ideal to aim at, and that everything inconsistent with it was wrong. We are still far from having worked it out in our social relations, which are largely influenced by selfish and therefore anti-Christian considerations, but at least we profess our belief in it, and that is a tremendous change from the time when it had to overcome and drive out another and widely different idea as to what was truly admirable and to be aimed at in character and conduct.

A Reversion to Type.

But, as I have just said, for a good while past potent attempts have been made to overthrow the Christian code and substitute another for it on the ground that it is effete. The avowed object of Nietzsche and others who thought with him on this, however much they might disagree with him in other things, was to destroy Christianity as a false morality—slave morality they called it. It is curious to note what a reversion to type this was. Nietzsche hated and despised Prussianism and yet was himself made by it, for there is not the slightest doubt that the Prussian spirit, which has increasingly dominated the German people for the last forty years, was partly created by and partly created the professors who have preached it truculently in the seminaries and instilled it in season and out of season into the rising generation.

History certainly does repeat itself in some ways, and this is one of them. The successful war of 1870 made the new-born German Empire drunk with the lust of power. Its militaristic temper, brutal, ruthless, domineering, was a revival of that of old Rome, the Rome of the invincible war machine and the Pagan philosophies. The similarity is rather striking; the main difference is that in modern Germany patriotism in the exclusive sense has become a passion to which everything else must be subordinated, whereas Rome at least aimed at the idea of a world-citizenship.

Otherwise we have just the same worship of power and might, the same lust of domination, the same ruthlessness in attaining ends, and then, of course, in both cases we have the philosopher coming along to show that this hard, grim, bloody-minded monster that had its foot on the neck of the human race represented something stronger, greater, more desirable from the ethical point of view, and every other point of view, than what it was seeking to supersede.

The Morality of the Mailed Fist.

Morality, the Nietzschean professor assures us, as we have hitherto understood it, is but a device of the weak to protect themselves against the strong; and he insists upon the necessity for a new morality, the morality of German Kultur and the mailed fist; the morality of the terrible "blonde beast." We have seen it at work in the last eighteen months and know its fruits. Here is its genesis—a triumphal war, a consequent State policy consistently carried out, and then the elevation of the cult of nationalism and brute violence into a religion. True, the name Christian is retained for it, but it is not Christianity at all—it is Paganism revived.

If Germany were to win this war Christianity would be trampled in the dust and anti-Christ enthroned. The slave-morality would have gone under, Nietzsche or no Nietzsche; his main contention would be justified.

Nevertheless, we must admit that such a state of things could not have arisen without the co-operation of the rest of Christendom to some extent. We are all in it, more or less. Ever since the marvellous and comparatively sudden forward leap of natural science in the Nineteenth Century, practically the whole civilised world has been feverishly busy exploiting our hitherto unknown material resources. There is no harm in that, to be sure, seen in its proper proportion, but unfortunately that is what has been lacking.

The Predominance of the Material.

Alfred Russel Wallace says that from the material point of view civilisation made more progress in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century than in the two thousand years preceding. What more likely than that men should come to be so preoccupied with

considerations of material good as to forget for a time that there was any other kind of good?

People always tend to become like their pursuits, and the practical materialism of the past fifty or sixty years has gradually developed a type of man who is, to use E. A. Abbott's term, "indisposed" towards religion. He does not fight it, does not definitely reject it; he simply becomes indifferent to it. He has no use for it. This is not because he is cleverer than his forefathers, far otherwise; it is that he has developed another kind of mind, a mind that is taken up with the things of this world, that dwells mainly on the outside of life. It is not even that we have gone backwards in our moral standards, nor that the vicious perversion of moral ideals which we have noted in the case of Germany has had very much vogue with us.

Moral standards are always changing, or, at least, changing their stresses. The morality of one generation is not quite that of another; still less is the morality of one race that of another.

Morality Apart from Religion.

It is a moot point, indeed, whether morality could not exist without religion. To have a human society at all we must have a morality of some sort; if every man were a law unto himself society would not hold together. And in commercial countries like our own the virtues emphasised will naturally be those which tend to the increase and conservation of property, such as being able to place reliance upon a man's word and the like. Integrity is a favourite excellence in the character of a successful industrial or commercial magnate.

In other and less prosperous countries, such as the southern districts of Europe, this is seldom so marked, and stay-at-home British Philistines are apt to be shocked when they hear that the Spaniards or Neapolitans have less regard for the truth than they and are quite without integrity.

It does not occur to them perhaps that their own integrity and truthfulness are consistent with a good deal of moral blindness in the matter of social justice. Perhaps a future generation will ask with amazement how it ever came to be thought that the possession of vast wealth and luxurious habits of living were consistent with a profession of Christianity while slums and rags remained. It has been truly said that the laws of England attribute more importance to offences against property than to those against the person, while in the Romance countries it is almost the reverse.

Our False Standards.

If we could get outside our world altogether and view it from some totally different environment we should see at once that we have long been so obsessed by materialistic ideas as to have lost consciousness of the fact; we simply take for granted that the practical things of life are those which relate to material values, and the practical man, the man of sound judgment upon material problems, whereas, surely, it should be just the other way round?

The truly practical man is the man who has some idea as to what life is for, and who knows that the pursuit of material objects as ends in themselves starves and enervates the soul.

This is the real secret of the falling away in regard to religion which has been noticeable throughout Europe and America for such a long time. We have been growing a wrong type of mind, a type whose tendency is to think and feel in terms of material good and that alone, and to assume almost without question that the only real kind of good is that which directly or indirectly pertains to the body and its needs.

There is not a pin to choose between the rich and the poor in this respect; the one has what the other wants, and that is about all.

Smash Prussianism.

And it is this invincible prepossession which has made the war. The war is a clash of spiritual ideals it is true, but if Germany had not been convinced that it was a thing supremely desirable to despoil other nations of their material possessions she would not have armed to do it, and we on our part would not have armed to resist her. How far we are right or wrong to resist her I will not now discuss. Suffice it to say that there is nothing now to be done but to smash Prussianism; let us do that first, and then perhaps we shall get a chance to rebuild civilisation on a safer plan.

For what is happening now is the inevitable outcome of the ideals by which we have been living. Holding as we have done that the more of this world's goods we could heap together the better and that physical well-being was the first of all considerations, no wonder we fight to get and keep. Germany has but out-distanced the rest of us in this

view of life and its meaning. And by the law of the good God all this has recoiled on itself, and is destroying itself as it always must in the end.

Things Worth Dying For.

Matter is but the sacrament of spirit, the instrument of the soul's probation; if its spiritual use be lost sight of or degraded, the result is chaos and suffering till we learn our lesson better. And with all its horrors the war has taught us that the ordinary man knows perfectly well when driven back upon it that there are things better worth living and dying for than can be measured and weighed in material symbols.

The men who are fighting our battles to-day have got up to this level, and it is hardly to be supposed that they will entirely come down from it when the war is over. It is not Christianity that is found wanting, but ourselves, and we have got to get back to first principles and endeavour once more to understand and, what is much harder, to obey our Master's precepts concerning life and its potentialities.

It is to me inconceivable that mankind at large should ever cease from taking interest in the spiritual background of life; as well expect it to descend to the level of the beasts of the field. I use the word spiritual in a wide sense to denote all the higher aspects of life, our loves, fellowships, mutual affinities, social joys, lofty emotions, yearnings, aspirations, wonderments.

Is there anything that so completely differentiates us from the brutes as the faculty of wonder? Man is the animal with the upward look. Think of what music means in the enlargement of our spiritual horizons, think of all the poetry and the painter's art, all the works of imagination that are the common possession of the race, and then ask whether it is possible to divorce these for long from their true setting in the worship of the Creator.

Religion a Necessity.

The possession of a spiritual nature implies religion, and religion we must have, not only as the sanction of all that we feel to be great, good, and beautiful in our total experience, but as the very soul thereof. It is often maintained that the artistic temperament can exist without religion just as morals can and do but the answer to that is that neither of them ever really does. The artistic temperament can wallow in sensuality, but it is bound to feel the thrill of transcendental mysteries or it would not be itself; beauty *is* the eternal thrusting through into the temporal, and always elusive; he who sees beauty sees God, though in a glass darkly.

And there is a point beyond which all mere utilitarianism in morals gives way to a passion for the ideal which loses itself in the skies; ethics may begin in the necessity for framing rules to enable human beings to rub along together, but they soon get beyond that and rise into a region where the individual conscience may have to defy the whole of society in the name of a higher than any merely human law; God stands revealed in the very thought of an ideal right towards which to aspire.

As Browning has it in "The Guardian Angel":

> O World, as God has made it! All is beauty:
> And knowing this is love, and love is duty.
> What further may be sought for or declared?

What men are learning on the battlefields of Europe of the glory of sacrifice and its mystical potencies is drawing them back to God by way of the cross of Christ; our vulgar, blatant, worldly, commercial, pleasure-loving age is seeing meanings in that cross it never saw before, and getting rid of many delusions in the process. We are being saved as by fire. Let us recover the simplicities of life and we recover faith.

The Secret of Blessedness.

We are relearning the old, old lesson that man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. We are realising almost with the surprise of a new discovery that not what we have but what we are is the secret of blessedness or wretchedness; that there is nothing to mourn over but the evil in our own hearts; and that death, however sad and dreadful its accompaniments, is but the prelude to vaster ventures of the soul and unimaginable joys.

Nothing can be killed that is worthy to be kept alive or essential to our highest well-being here or hereafter.

If I had my time to come over again I should with even greater earnestness try to put first things first. The spiritual is not the social any more than it is the intellectual; these derive from it but are not itself, and if made a substitute for it can but result in disillusionment. I should fight for social justice with all my might and main, for the abolition of caste privilege, grinding poverty, and the all round uglification of life by greed and covetousness. But I should know that

to try to make men good and happy by giving them perfect surroundings would be hopeless taken by itself.

Think and Feel Socially.

Quicken the spiritual consciousness, the sense of God, and we shall solve the social problem, too; I have no confidence in any other solution. The best friends of the working man have seen long ago that we should never get the Socialised State till we had trained all classes to think and feel socially? And what is that but to say that what we need is a Church State, a State which realises itself the Body of Christ and its citizens members one of another? We are that already, but we don't know it, hence all our troubles.

And if Germany, by preaching one idea persistently and thoroughly for forty years, could create a general consciousness of national solidarity for predatory purposes, cannot servants of Christ everywhere begin to work with consecrated determination to create a general consciousness of spiritual solidarity which will destroy all the forces of harm and hate, and superimpose the Kingdom of God upon the ruins of the materialistic civilisation which is now perishing in smoke and flame?

There is nothing the matter with the world but wickedness, and wickedness, as some of the Alexandrian Fathers would have said, is at bottom nothing but ignorance. If we only knew our true interest no man would ever dream of trying to exploit his neighbour.

Try Christianity!

So to those who fear for the future of the Christian religion I would say: Trouble not yourselves; it is not Christianity that has failed but Christian fidelity. All talk about Christianity being on its trial and the like is sheer nonsense: it has never been on its trial: it is about time it was. A great playwright once said from my pulpit that there had never been more than one real Christian, and that the world crucified Him. Some time after the war started he is reported to have said also in reply to a question as to what would be the best course to follow when peace returned, that he hoped the nations might be persuaded to try Christianity for a change.

Individuals have tried Christianity with a certain amount of success; society never. Where then is the use of charging a rule of life with having proved inadequate to human needs when it has never had the chance of showing itself equal to them? And who can doubt that it is equal to them, and more than equal? The one certain cure for all our ills would be to get men to live, as John Stuart Mill said, so that Jesus Christ would approve their life. If that could be done little else would remain to be done, for we should have the disposition to get together and help to bear one another's burdens instead of adding to them, and that would soon solve all our problems.

The Impulse to Self-Sacrifice.

And the curious thing is that there is in every one of us something that can be appealed to along this line already. I think it would be no exaggeration to say that the two strongest tendencies in human nature are absolutely opposed, namely, the tendency towards self-preservation and the tendency towards self-sacrifice. Call for either and you will usually get it according to the plane on which you issue your summons. The very same men who will do mean and selfish things in the ordinary way of business will spring to arms and fling their lives away in the hour of their country's need, as we are now seeing.

This impulse to self-sacrifice in the presence of a great impersonal ideal, of something we feel has the right to demand our uttermost, is the very basic principle of the Christian gospel. Until it can be eradicated from the human heart there can be no question of dethroning Him whose very name is the synonym for self-sacrificing love, and in whose pierced hand is the sceptre of omnipotence.

R. J. C.—THE MAN.

An intimate and arresting character sketch of the Rev. R. J. Campbell, written by a personal friend, will be found in the May PEARSON'S MAGAZINE. *It includes many anecdotes, printed for the first time, and throws a most interesting light on the sense of humour, the wide sympathies, and the many lovable characteristics of the greatest preacher of to-day.*

A House-Painter's Diary

By Jessie Pope

". . . The world at your hands be more gracious
And lovelier in lordship, of things,
Clothed round by sweet Art with the spacious
Warm heaven of her imminent wings."

5.50 Wake with a jump from dreamin' as I was Lord Kitchener dotting the Crown Prince one on the 'ead with a beer bottle, and find I'm only Tom Tovey, house-painter, rejected by the Army on account of me flat feet, and remember I've got a outside job on at 'illcrest, Wadsworth Road, and a young 'urricane blowing. Turn over for another ten minutes.

6.0. Dream I'm on my job this time—'ouse afire, female clingin' to 'illcrest chimley. Looks like Nell (my best girl, she was, till she turned me over because I took me cousin Becky to the pictures). Crawl to her rescue across red 'ot tiles and find she isn't Nell after all, and drop 'er into the arms of another bloke waiting below. Just my luck. Chimley pot falls with a crash and———

6.10. Wake with a jump, leap out of bed with another, get into my duds in two shakes of a duck's tail. Late again, and foreman got a down on me, too. Leg it to the yard. Climb fence—short cut to paint shed. Busy loading truck when foreman arrives.

"You gotter get on with 'illcrest winders," 'e says, "instead o' Jack Wilkes—sacked 'im last night. 'E was too slow for a funeral. Sashes dark green, frames white. Three coats of paint," 'e says, lookin' at specification. "Make 'em do with *two*, and slobber it on mighty quick, and get a bit more done nor wot you did yesterday, or I shall 'ave to make another alteration."

"Right you are," I says.

6.45. Load truck, put clean jacket and apron in basket as well as dirty one in case 'illcrest slaveys are smart gals. Push truck along to Wadsworth Road, whistlin' "Little Grey Home in the West"—and thinkin' about Nell all the time. Wonder where she's got to. Left 'er last place in a 'urry on account o' telling the missus off. A bit saucy, but the only lump of love for me if I live to be a 'undred.

7.0. Reach the job. Tidy sized villa, pretty garden. Slaveys not up yet—no smoke comin' out of kitchen chimley. 'Ave a drink out of me tea can and a crust of bread and marg. Put on clean jacket and apron out of respect to neat appearance of 'illcrest. Whistle "'ere we are, 'ere we are, 'ere we are again."

7.10. Make a start on first floor front winder. Pull down top sash. Shrill exclamation from elderly female voice inside. Sound of heavy scuttling and blind pulled down with a run.

7.20. Give the sash and frame a quick brush down—no time to scrape them—and shift ladder to next winder. Make a start on frame, whistle "Till the Boys Come 'ome." 'Ear faint startled shriek from young female voice—catch a glimpse between curtains of white figure whisking across the room, and down comes the blind in a jiffy.

7.45. Shift ladder a few yards along the wall to big bow over porch. Get to work with the brush. Lift lower sash to get at frame—out pops the bald 'ead of elderly gent in striped pyjamas.

"Will you kindly start on the ground floor windows, my man," says 'e, "and not disturb my family at this unearthly hour in the morning. I told you the same thing yesterday."

"Not me, sir," I says; "that was my mate, sir," I says.

"Well, I tell you now," 'e says; "this painting is a ——— nuisance," 'e says. "You chaps begin work too early."

"That's right, sir," I says, "we do, and there ought to be a law agin it. But I'll get on with the ground floor, sir. Sorry I woke you." 'E nods, and goes back to 'is downy.

8.15. Get on with the droring-room frame—shan't disturb the family circle there unless they eats their breakfastses on the grand pianner. Work and whistle for a quarter-of-an-hour without stopping. 'Ear footsteps be'ind.

"'Ave a cup o' corfee?" says a voice.

My 'eart misfires badly. I looks round. Blowed if it ain't Nell, as fresh as a daisy in 'er print dress and apron, with a smile on 'er face and the wind blowing little bits o' curly 'air from under 'er saucy cap.

"Oh——" she gasps, and 'er smile freezes; "it ain't the same man!"

"No, miss," I says coldly, remembering the smile was not for me. "It ain't—'e got the sack last night."

"Did 'e?" she says. "Wothever for?"

"For wastin' of 'is time makin' love to the cook," I says.

"Indeed," she says, tossin' 'er 'ead: "well, they'll 'ave no call to sack *you* for that, any'ow."

"Not a chance," I says, and turns round and goes on with my job.

"It's a pity to waste the corfee," she says after a minute, "a cold windy morning like this, and if I bring you a sandwidge—we've got a lovely 'am in cut—will you eat it?"

"Don't mind if I do," I says, indifferent like, but me 'eart still jumpin' about like a bird in a cage to think I've come acrost my best girl again, but I go on workin' and whistlin' as if nothing mattered but my job, and don't look round when she comes back, neither.

8.45. Touches my arm—wish she wouldn't; takes all the stiffening out of me.

"'Ere it is," she says.

"Righto," says I. "Put it down. I'll get on to it presently."

"Oh, drink the corfee while it's 'ot," she says pleadingly; "you look chilled to the bone."

So I takes a gulp to satisfy 'er.

"'Ow's Becky?" she asks.

"She looked all right last time I clapped eyes on 'er," I says, "which was when I took 'er to the pictures two months ago."

"Reely!" says Nell, coming a bit closer. Bell rings violently indoors.

"That's the master for his shaving water," she says. "'Ousemaid's on 'er ollerdy—I'm run off me feet. 'Is temper's something chronic, so's the old lady's—wouldn't 'ave stopped me month but for Miss Brenda; 'oping to see 'er through—poor lamb."

Bell rings again, more violent.

"What she 'as to put up with," continues Nell, "nobody wouldn't believe. Ah, Tom Tovey, there's trouble in this 'ouse!"

'Ear faint startled shriek from young female voice—catch a glimpse between curtains of white figure whisking across the room.

"And there'll be more soon, my gal, if you don't answer that there bell," I says.

"Let 'im ring!" says Nell. "I've no patience with 'im, breakin' my young lady's 'eart—and 'er gettin' paler every day and never allowed out by 'erself. It's all along of a Horstralian, one of these 'ere woundeds—what she gotter know when she——"

Blood-curdling shout down front stairs. "Is anybody going to bring my water or am I to fetch it myself?"

Nell turns a bit pale and flies to the kitchen, and I goes on with slobberin' the first coat on, as good as gold.

9.15. Get through a tidy bit of work and whistle selections from Trovvertory until clatter of cups in breakfast-room show that family is mugging theirselves over corfee, fried soles, and cold 'am. Go round to scullery to mix a bit o' colour. Find Nell sniffing and red round the eyes.

"What's up *now*?" I says.

"They're breaking 'er 'eart, poor lamb," she says; "and 'e's going to-day and they

"Cookie dear," she says, "don't bother about cleaning my patent shoes. I'm not going out to day."

won't let 'er say good-bye. They ought to be shown up," she says; "it's worse than cruelty to animals."

Just then young lady comes in kitchen—peep at 'er through scullery door—pretty young thing, fair 'air, big dark eyes, pale face, and a 'aughty sort o' lift to 'er chin, like a filly only 'alf broken.

"Cookie, dear," she says, "don't bother about cleaning my patent shoes. I'm not going out to-day."

"Oh, Miss Brenda," says Nell, "a breath of fresh air would give you a appetite for lunch; you've eat no breakfast."

"I can't eat, and what's the good of going out if Uncle and Aunt come with me?" she says, looking pale and forlorn.

"You 'ave another talk to 'em, miss, when they go in the libery to read their newspapers," says Nell. "They 'as both 'ad good breakfasises. They may be feeling more kindly disposed. You know your uncle worships the ground you walk on, and you can twist 'im round your finger."

Miss Brenda shakes 'er 'ead.

"Not over this," she says, 'er pretty, round chin all puckering and her lips quivering. "Still, I *will* have another try—Ow!" she squeaks in a whisper, catching sight of me in the scullery. "I didn't know there was a man there!"

"Oh, that's only the painter, miss," says Nell; "'e doesn't count—an old friend of mine, and he's quite 'armless."

"Oh, is that Tom Tovey?" says Miss Brenda, "the one you're always talking about."

Nell gets red in the face and bustles her out of the kitchen, and I laughs to myself.

10.0. Start on first-floor front again, just above libery, winder open, rustle o' newspapers inside. Stop whistling "Lamarcelays," give all my mind to my work; ticklish job painting sashes so as not to smear the colour on the glass.

10.15. 'Ear Miss Brenda's pleading voice in libery, and old aunt's scratchy one; can't catch the words until old gent suddenly thunders out: "No! That's my answer, and if you talk from now to Doomsday you'll get no other. I'd rather see you in your grave than married to one of these semi-savages."

"I don't forget all you and Auntie have done for me," says the girl's voice. "Don't think I'm not grateful. But I love him. He's the dearest boy in the world, and, Uncle *darling*, it's silly calling people semi-savages because they come from a long distance."

"And the sooner they go back there the better," chips in the old lady. "When I gave you permission to train for a V.A.D. I was told all you would have to do was to polish taps and set the patients' tea-trays. I little thought you would be so unladylike as to fall in love with a bushranger!"

The young lady laughs, and very pretty it sounds, too.

"Why, Auntie dear," she says, "if you only saw him you'd fall in love with him yourself."

"Oh!" squeals the old girl. "What a disgraceful thing to say!"

"Go to your room," ejaculates old gent fiercely, "and don't come down till you're in a better frame of mind."

"You are both very cruel," says Miss Brenda.

Hear libery door open and shut, and presently sounds of subdued sobbin' in left-'and first-floor winder. Feel downright sorry for that little gal. Whistle "Gilbert the Filbert" to keep 'er spirits up.

11.30. All quiet. Nell busy with lunch. Old lady comes out to look at me. She's a stout party, iron-grey 'air, and moustache to match. Looks a bit old-fashioned at me but doesn't say nothing. Goes round to kitchen. 'Ear 'er telling Nell off a bit. Just going to light a fag when foreman comes in at gate. Work like a nigger instead.

"Look 'ere," he says, "you're using too much turps in this colour," 'e says; "remember turps ain't picked up in the gutter," 'e says.

"Righto!" I says. "But this winder paint won't 'arf blister if I don't put a drop o' turps in it."

"Mind your own business," 'e says, "and keep your mouth shut."

11.40. Old gent walks out with big cigar on.

"How long do you mean to keep this job hanging about," he says, "with only one man to do it?"

"Sorry, sir," says the foreman, touching 'is cap; "scarcity of labour owin' to the war, sir. I'll try to send another chap round this afternoon, sir."

Old gent puts 'is 'and in 'is trowsies pocket.

"I'm anxious the job should be done to your satisfaction, sir," says the foreman, very servile, sidling up to 'im. Old gent takes a matchbox out of 'is pocket and lights 'is cigar.

"That's right," he says. "Good day." Foreman looks sad, scowls at me, and takes 'isself orf.

12.15. Wind blows cold; gets through flap in coat where there ought to be a button and isn't. Nice little job for Nell one of these days if she be'aves 'erself. Can smell roast mutton cooking in kitchen—young pertaters—onion sauce. Could do with a bit myself.

12.30. Buzzer goes at last. Nip down ladder—stroll to kitchen winder. Old lady going through store-cupboard. No go. Take my dinner basket to summer 'ouse, and then go down the road for a smoke.

Just outside gate see tall, good-looking young chap in khaki with a slouch 'at on. The Horstralian, or my name ain't Tom Tovey! 'E looks at me, and strolls up.

"You working at Hillcrest?" he says.

"That's right, sir," I says. "Anything I can do for you, sir?"

'E looks me straight in the eye.

"Sure," 'e says. "Can you tell me if the young lady is indoors?"

"She is, sir," I says, "sitting by 'erself in 'er room cryin' 'er eyes out."

'E clenches 'is 'ands. Tidy bunch of bones, both of them.

"The job of painting winders," I says, "gives a chap a insight into a family circle 'e couldn't get otherwise."

'E nods, offers me a cigarette and switches off to a bit of talk about the war and things in general. I could see 'e was sizing me up. Same 'ere. I know a gent when I see one, 'owever free an' easy they may be with the likes of us.

"You want to see that young lady?" I says presently.

"Sure," he replies.

"An' if you go to the front door you'll only see the old gent."

"You bet your life on it," 'e says, "and I'm likely to lose my temper. And I don't want to do that this journey."

"Scribble a note, sir. The cook is a friend of mine. I'll see the lady gets it."

He shakes 'is 'ead.

"No," 'e says, "I must *speak* to her. There's been too much trouble over notes already," 'e says.

I thinks a bit.

"The foreman told the old gent 'e'd put another man on the job this afternoon," says I. "'E ain't got another man to spare. I've

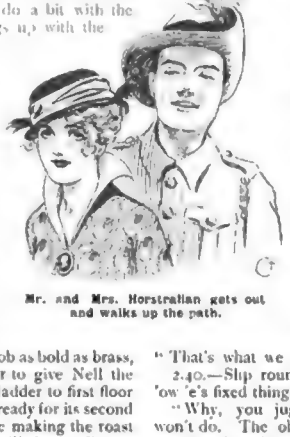
Shift the ladder to first floor left-'and winder . . . . Up goes my new mate. I stands below to keep guard. [Page 66, col. 1.]

got a dirty jacket and apron in me bag. You can 'ave my cap. Go up the ladder to 'er winder as my mate, and do a bit with the brush while you fix things up with the lady."

'E grins all over 'is face.

"That's some scheme," 'e says. "I want her to marry me to-day. I've got the license, and I'll have a taxi waiting in the lane—if we can only get her out of the house."

1.30.—Buzzer goes again. Fetch my jacket and apron. 'E slips 'em on, and my old cap on top make 'im look it to the life. 'E carries the basket and a pot of paint, and we walks back to the job as bold as brass, calling in at kitchen winder to give Nell the lie of the land. Shift the ladder to first floor left 'and winder—which is ready for its second coat—while old couple are making the roast lamb and green peas look silly in the dining-room.



Mr. and Mrs. Horstralian gets out and walks up the path.

1.50.—Up goes my new mate. I stands below to keep guard. 'Ear a soft "Cooee," a little squeak of delight, and whistle "The Sunshine of your Smile," with variations to drown hurried whispers.

2.15.—Mate starts coming down. Just at that moment old gent comes out of French winder, and along the path towards us.

"'Old 'ard, mate," I calls; "that there top sash wants another dash o' colour."

"I'm glad to see there are two of you this afternoon," says old gent.

"That's right, sir," I says; "foreman sent another chap to 'urry the job along."

"A good thing, too," 'e says. "How long will the paint take drying, for this confounded smell is playing the very deuce with my liver?"

"It's 'ard to say, sir," I says; "but you can take it from me, sir, as the *painters* gets dry much quicker than the *paint*."

Thought that'd shift the mean old blighter—and so it does. He gives a grunt, and walks back into the 'ouse for 'is sihester, and we all four breathes again, for Nell had been peeping through the kitchen lattice to see what 'appened.

"'Ere, Bill," I says loudly, "we must 'ave a drop more turps. You'd better leg it back to the shop and bring 'arf a gallon."

"That's what we want."

2.40.—Slip round to kitchen and tell Nell 'ow 'e's fixed things with the young lady.

"Why, you juggins," she says, "*that* won't do. The old missus sets in the back room, and she's got eyes like a cat. Shift the ladder round to the bathroom at the side of the 'ouse. She'll 'ave to get down that way, and nobody will see 'er."

"I can't shift the long ladder round there by myself," I says; "no man couldn't."

"What price me?" she says. "I'm as strong as a man and got twice as much gumption. I'll take a cup o' tea to my young lady, and tell 'er wot to do."

2.50.—Old girl watching at the back and old gent sihestering in front as we shift ladder. Nell puts 'er back into it, and we get along fine. Give 'er the news of the liver and the promise of a good berth for married couple down under.

"Just suit you and Becky, won't it?" says Nell.

"What-o, not 'alf," says I, and catch 'er round the waist—but she slips away a moment too soon, whispering, "One job at a time, Tom. We gotter settle *their* business first."

3.0.—Put second coat on libery frame, and keep an eye on old gent asleep in harm chair. 'Ear motor 'ooting softly down the lane. Nell slips round to steady ladder—catch sight of flutter of white skirts through the side bushes—'ear motor go on, and know the young lady is a good starter, 'owever she may finish.

4.0. Put in a good hour's work while Nell

2.30.—Down 'e comes, and I strolls with him to the gate giving instructions.

"All serene," 'e says as 'e slips off my things, "she's *coming!* I'm going to fetch the taxi. When she hears me hoot down the lane she's going to slip out at the back and across the garden. There's a fiver for you if it goes through," 'e says, "and a job waiting for you in my country, my boy, whenever you like to come for it."

"Married couple, sir," I says.

"Sure," 'e says.

packs 'er young lady's things upstairs on the sly. Shift step-ladder to droring-room and second coat sashes; whistle "Michigan" till old girl comes out and says: "Young man, pray desist from that noise. The penetrating smell of the paint makes my head ache enough." I desists, and winks at Nell, smart and pretty in black dress and muslin cap and apron, laying afternoon tea in the droring-room. Slap-up spread—brown and white brenbutter, 'ot scones, three kinds o' cake, and a dish of biscuits. Lumme, they do oil theirselves up properly at 'illcrest! Old girl lowers 'erself in one harm-chair, old gent sets down oppersite and says: "Cook, tell Miss Brenda to come down now and pour out tea."

4.10. Sound of taxi in the lane. Stops at gate. Mr. and Mrs. Horstralian gets out and walks up the path. I nips off the step-ladder and flings open the droring-room French winders, and in they goes, both getting a bit of white paint on their sleeves, a bridal favour for luck. The old gent jumps to 'is feet.

"Oh, uncle, darling, we're married!" says Mrs. Horstralian, throwin' 'er arms round 'is neck. "We couldn't help it. No power on earth could stop us."

The old lady sits with 'er mouth open and drops 'er knitting. The Horstralian picks it up and shakes 'ands with 'er—and then I couldn't see no more, for Nell comes be'ind and lugs me back by me white jacket.

"Now, then, peepin' Tom," she says, "mind your own business."

"I will," says I, ketching 'old of 'er, and giving 'er a straight kiss on 'er lips; and, what's more, she give it me back in no time.

5.0. 'Aving a bit of tea with Nell in the kitchen when in comes Mrs. Horstralian rosy red with tears on 'er cheeks.

"It's all right, cookie, darling," she says, "they've forgiven us, and you Nell and your Tom Tovey are to come straight in the drawing-room and have a glass of champagne. My *husband* insists on it. So come along both of you and drink our health." And we done it, too!

5.30. Lock my pots and brushes in the shed, and walk 'ome with a fiver in me pocket. 'Alf way taxi overtakes me and stops.

"Jump up," says the bridegroom. "We'll give you a lift." And in I gets with my basket and can, and rests me flat feet.

7.30. 'As a bit of supper and a pint of porter. Think things over. Found my best girl—see 'er again to-morrow—earned a fiver, pulled noose round runaway couple drank champagne in gent's droring-room drove 'ome in me motor like a markiss—not such a bad day for a flat-footed house-painter, taking it all round!

A SERENADE.

The nightingales, the nightingales,
How sweetly they do shine!
The dewdrops sparkle on the lawn
Like dumplings large and fine.
The frogs are yawning sleepily:
Come out, my Clementine!

Oh, let me see your lovely face!
Dear Clementine, you are
As beauteous as a five-pound note,
Or as a choice cigar;
As sweet as a half-holiday,
Or penny chocolate-bar.

The breeze wafts scent of onions fried
From some near kitchen door,
And all the humming-bees that be
Now humming be no more.
The flowers, too, have gone to sleep:
Oh, hear them softly snore!

The sky is bristling now with stars
Just like a porcupine;
I'll get the pins and needles soon
Although the night is fine
I can't stand here for ever, so
Come out, my Clementine!

Eliot Skeet

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

A MONSTER MASCOT.

Various animals have since the war been elected to the proud position of mascot either of a regiment or one of our warships, and cats, dogs, monkeys, and other pets have been adopted in this connection.

One of the most curious mascots is the walrus captured by some of our sailors in the Royal Navy, and forthwith established on board their ship. He is certainly a rather ponderous pet, and though his appearance is not prepossessing, there is a certain air of benevolence about his massive features.

Judging by his air of languid self-satisfaction, the walrus is well contented with his appointment to so comfortable a post, but should the ship go into action his serenity may receive a rude shock.

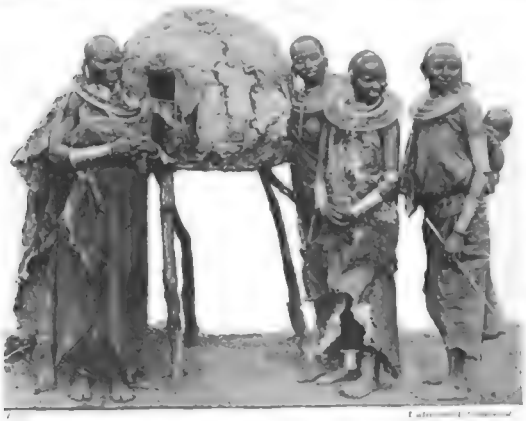
A walrus captured by some of our sailors and now installed as mascot on board a warship.

BELLES OF EAST AFRICA.

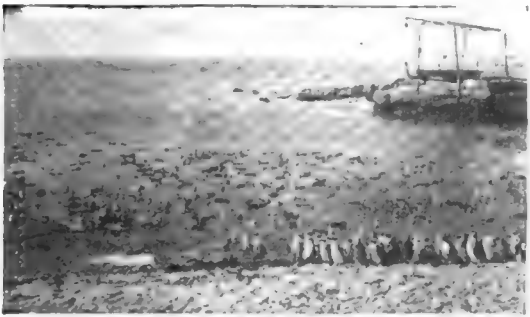
Curious ideas of beauty prevail in different parts of the world, and although these dusky ladies may appear unlovely to us, in German East Africa they are considered quite comely.

Anyway, they have all managed to secure husbands, for the copper neck and arm ornaments they are wearing are allowed to be worn only by married women. Nor do they seem to suffer from depression, for a more cheery looking quartette it would be hard to find.

Were it not that the "glad-eye" can hardly have penetrated to the wilds of German East Africa, one might suspect the lady with the baby on her back of indulging in this questionable pastime.



Types of the native women of German East Africa, where our soldiers are fighting so gallantly.



These are not holiday-makers enjoying a bathe, but penguins at Penguin Island, off the coast of South-West Africa.

A DIP IN THE BRINY.

BATHING seems to be a popular pastime among the penguins who live on Penguin Island, off the coast of South West Africa.

Penguins are generally connected in one's mind with the ice and snow of Arctic regions, but the tropical penguins are smaller than their more northerly fellows.

When a number of them decide to take a dip together, the effect from a distance is not unlike that of the sea at some holiday resort during August.

"SOME" SOLDIER.

THERE are many out-size soldiers in the Army to-day, and of these the Worcestershire Yeomanry can boast at least one. The photograph, which was taken in Alexandria, shows this giant Yeoman with two companions, members of the R.A.M.C. (T.F.).

They are both good average specimens of the British Army, but are completely dwarfed by their tall friend.

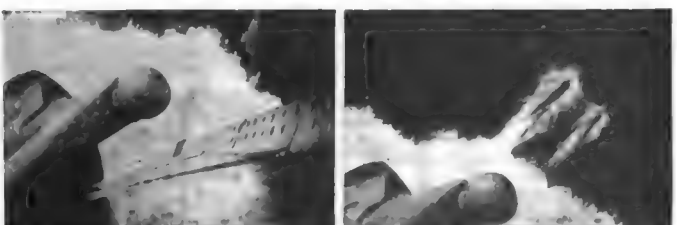
Photo J. Weiss

A giant soldier of the Worcestershire Yeomanry, towering over two of his companions.

SEEN FROM THE BOWS.

IN order to take these curious photographs the operator had to hang head downwards over the bows of the ship, which accounts for the anchor coming out so prominently.

The bow wave also has a strange appearance taken from such an angle, and the two porpoises seem in imminent danger of extinction unless they can get out of the steamer's track speedily.



Photos G. Ltr.

The anchor and bow wave of a vessel as seen by an operator leaning head downwards over the bows. The two strange objects in the second picture are porpoises.

Papa Bowser does not encourage the ardent lover, and —

to have succeeded so admirably with such restless sitters.

The story illustrated by these photographs shows that even in dog-land true love does not always run smooth, for when Billy Beagle proposed with due form and ceremony for the paw of Susie Bowser, he was indignantly repulsed by Papa. Thrust ignominiously from the door with his floral offering, Billy persuaded his lady-love to adopt more drastic measures, and they eloped at dead of night.

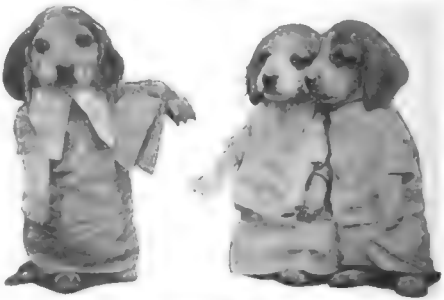
Papa Bowser, furious at the turn things had taken, pursued the couple in a motor-car, but met with a mishap, and the elopers were married before he could prevent it.

Apparently it was not a case of marry in haste and repent at leisure, for Billy and his bride found love in a cottage entirely

A DOGGY ELOPEMENT.

THE LOVE STORY OF BILLY BEAGLE AND SUSIE BOWSER.

ANIMALS are always difficult to photograph, but the difficulty is increased when they have first to be prevailed upon to assume special poses. The dogs who took part in this little romance certainly possessed not only unusual intelligence, but a good deal of talent for acting. The photographer, too, must have been endowed with unusual skill and patience



— the young couple accordingly elope, and are married secretly.

Their bliss is complete on the arrival of Baby Billy, who quite wins his grandfather's heart.

satisfying, and on the advent of Baby Billy had nothing left to desire.

To make matters still more pleasant, the baby entirely won his grandfather's heart, and a reconciliation took place.

Such is the romance which these clever dogs have been trained to act in dumb show. Needless to say, it required considerable perseverance before they were pronounced perfect.

The dogs appear quite to have entered into the spirit of the play, and the proud expression on the parents' faces in the last picture is most realistic.

SECOND IN ROME.

By May Edginton.

"Better be first in a little Iberian village than second in Rome."—Julius Cæsar.

I.

Robert bought *Punch* for himself and *The Ladies' Field* for Hetty, as he always did, and they settled back into opposite corners of their first-class carriage, with the worldly feeling they regularly experienced on each annual visit to Town, during the spring-cleaning of the Hall down in Little Muchmarsh.

"Off again!" remarked Robert, for the twentieth time in twenty years. "Off again!"

"I hope Henry won't hurry the horses going home," replied Hetty, "and that cook will have finished the marmalade by the time we get back, and not allow herself to be fobbed off with a vacuum-cleaner."

Robert then read his *Punch* and Hetty her *Ladies' Field*.

Arriving in Town they drove to the quiet hotel where they always stayed, ascended in the lift to the room they had occupied annually at the same time for twenty years, and Hetty, with wifely care, unpacked the bags.

She had brought the expensive dress which she had worn on the last five of these annual visits, and Robert had brought the better of his two evening suits, as he always did, and they were thoroughly prepared for their wicked round of pleasure.

"I booked our usual table, love," said Robert, looking at his watch, "for the usual time, at Reade's."

"Then," Hetty replied, "we had better dress."

With an exhilarating sense of hurry, of living in a world where time mattered, they prepared themselves to be the cynosure of eyes at Reade's. Over her best dress Hetty put the voluminous opera cloak which had been included in her trousseau, and when she was fully equipped she looked at her reflection with a gentle pride.

In the dressing-room adjoining, Robert also looked at his reflection with a gentle pride.

"I carry my age well," he thought.

The hall porter escorted them to a taxi-cab, an obsequious page closed the door, and they rolled away from the quiet by-street into the life of London.

Reade himself received and remembered them as he had received and remembered them each year, and they walked into the restaurant with the pleasant sense of having had a very perfect ovation, such as Little Muchmarsh might have given them.

It was a good dinner and, according to holiday habit, they drank champagne.

They looked at the people about them, at the latest customs, latest clothes, and latest coiffures; Robert warmed; the hour grew mellow; the restaurant lay in a glow of amber light.

"Robert," said Hetty, "do you see that creature in black?"

II.

Robert had looked many times.

As for the creature in black, she looked, too, and she saw a stout gentleman, of momentarily increasing liberality of mind, up from the country, dining in his accustomed seat at Reade's. From her own place in the circle of a merry party, again and again her bright, deep eyes crossed Robert's, and that she pointed him out discreetly—for her table was near his own—to her companions he could see.

Then Robert looked at Hetty and he thought:

"Hetty's a good woman. But—but she's *my wife*. A man like me, once in way, say,

They looked at the people about them. . . . "Robert," said Hetty, "do you see that creature in black?" Robert had looked many times. [Page 71, col. 2.]

when he comes up to Town, needs to enjoy himself, needs a little stimulating society. Hetty's a good girl, but she's stuck fast. She can't understand the agility of a man's tastes. This isn't Muchmarsh, and that's a ve-ry, *ve ry* fine little woman over there."

Robert took another glass of champagne, and thought further:

"That's a woman I could appreciate and who'd appreciate me. If I were dining with her now. . . . Oh! she'd enjoy herself and so should I! Hetty—Hetty's a deuced good wife, but, 'pon my word, she's a bit old-fashioned. She's not kept herself up to date. She couldn't talk to a man like that little woman. 'Pon my word, a man might as well be dining at home. This isn't Muchmarsh—it's London, and a fellow's liberty——"

Just as Robert had reached the point of thinking of himself as a fellow with liberty to enjoy, the woman in black looked again, and the champagne and the amber lights showed him a very roguish lure in her eyes. In a clear, hilarious voice she said to her companions:

"Come on after the theatre to the Huilo! Club. I'll be there. We'll dance for an hour or two, and supper's at twelve. Oh, come!"

Robert had a sweet and giddy thought for so old a married man, an idea, an inspiration, which made him smile.

Leaning across the table he said to Hetty:

"Hetty my dear, I'm going to the telephone; I'm going to ring up John at his club, and if he's there I think I'd like to stroll round after dinner and have a chat with him."

"But, you know, Robert, we always go to bed early after the journey up."

"You'll go, my dear, you'll go. But I'd like to look round; I'd like to see Town."

A little perturbed by this unusual departure from a wise and excellent habit, Hetty sat and waited while Robert went, directed by the waiter, to the telephone. He walked self-consciously past the lady in black, and all the way down the restaurant he thought he felt her eyes probing like diamond gimlets into his back. Robert was not exactly embarrassed by this, for he knew that he was a figure whom women admired. The vicar's sister and the postmistress and the schoolmistress and the lodge-keeper's wife, and the doctor's daughter at Muchmarsh always admired him. Hetty admired him, too, of course.

And now this little, lean, rather hawk-nosed, vivid-coloured woman in the—er—ha! ha!—er—the very *daring* black gown

admired him also. Good thing poor Hetty didn't see! Good thing she couldn't read what was passing in his mind!

Robert assured himself through the telephone that John was, and would remain, at his club.

He returned to Hetty, passing close by the chair of the woman in black, and over the chair-back hung a marvel of an evening wrap, from which strange, faint, lovely scents emanated.

Assisting Hetty with the cumbrous cloak from her twenty-one-year old trousseau, Robert saddened himself somewhat by a comparison of it with the wonderful thing hanging near.

"Yes," he said to himself, "there's no doubt Hetty's rusted a bit; she doesn't know how to dress now; she's got no conversation, poor girl. Ah, well! Ah, well!"

Robert put Hetty into a taxicab and sent her back to the quiet hotel alone.

An old gentleman of the modern school called John was duly found at his club. John had dined and was very happy. He shook Robert's hand warmly for some moments, and sent a crusted waiter post haste for cigars.

"Well, my dear boy," said John, "this is very nice indeed. Very, very nice. You up for your usual spring visit to us, then? Hetty well? I read in the *Field* that you had some wonderful runs last winter. You must sit down and tell me all about it."

"John," replied Robert, "do you know the Hullo! Club?"

"Come, come, Robert!" cried the old gentleman called John.

This pleased Robert very much. He mellowed and his eye brightened. He told John of the incident at Reade's; further, he spoke a trifle ruefully of the shackles of convention. Leaning over and becoming confidential, he said:

"I'm not a stick-in-the-mud, you know, John; I'm a fellow that keeps *au courant* with life. Life, John! Ah, we saw more than a bit together in the old days, eh? . . . I'm not a fellow who rusts, you know. I may administer Little Muchmarsh, and down there I keep 'em moral. Yes, I keep 'em moral, by gad! But up here it's different, eh, John? Eh?"

The rich chuckles of the old gentleman called John here interrupted Robert for a moment, but soon he continued:

"Women rust in the country, you know. Eh? I wouldn't let Hetty know for the world that she's rusted, but—by gad, John, I'd like you to have seen that little woman. A reg'lar puss, a——"

"It's not difficult to get into the Hullo! Club," said John. "It's not exactly Flurry's, or the Three Thousand, my boy. I won't say I haven't been"—but though the old gentleman looked very smilingly down his nose, neither did he say that he had—"and I can, as our cousins say, 'put you wise.' Let me just give you the address and the open sesame."

John then imparted this knowledge.

Robert drove away about eleven-thirty for the land of adventure in which he felt so eminent an explorer, and he entered the great room where the Hullo! Club held its nocturnal revels with a proud foot and a light heart. Supper tables were set out at one end of the room, flanked by a bar, but the greater space of the floor was cleared for dancing, and a string orchestra played in an alcove.

The lady in black had already arrived with her entire restaurant party.

III.

She laughed.

Robert drew himself up, settled his waistcoat, smiled ineffably, advanced and bowed, as he had bowed before Hetty at his first ball and hers

The lady laughed more.

Robert said: "Pardon me, but did I not have the pleasure of dining near you at Reade's?

She sat on an upright chair in her black gown, which, in spite of its modish fullness, made her figure seem all curls and curves, and with a wicked wave of a sequined fan summoned her circle around her. They hovered about Robert, and on every face was a smile, as if she had let them into some jest regarding his arrival.

She said: "My dear good man, what—what audacity!"

Robert's third chin settled itself into his collar, and the light of heaven played over his face. "May I?" he asked tenderly, and took a chair near hers. She turned a bare shoulder on her circle as if now indeed she had no further use for them, and, assimilating such delicious flattery, Robert made rapid strides towards intimacy.

She let Robert know that she felt him something altogether new.

Boldly he asked her to supper. They supped on a menu which made Robert's gastric region quail.

People floating near, and people floating

Robert swayed and slid and darted sensationally. . . . The lady in black laughed and laughed; she grimaced daintily at people as she hurried by them.

by in strange manner of embraces, looked at him a great deal, but he was used to being the cynosure of eyes. At Little Muchmarsh all heads turned when he rode down the street.

The little vivid woman could drink a great deal of champagne, and Robert matched glass for glass.

He asked for a dance.

"You waltz?" she crooned tenderly, with an inscrutable *diablerie* in her eye.

"I am passionately fond of waltzing," he replied ardently.

They took the floor.

A terrible realisation came to Robert. People had altered their mode of dancing. People seemed to count *one*—two—three, *one*—two—three no more. They swayed and slid and darted sensationally; they clasped each other with abandon; they reversed passionately—a strange, wilful, and headlong motion with which Robert was wholly unfamiliar.

"*One*—two—three," he said to himself, "*one*—two—three. The band," he said, frowning, "does not accent the time." He strove to calm his heaving chest, while already his collar wilted.

"You prefer," his partner murmured, "the old style of waltzing?"

"Certainly not!" breathed Robert. "Certainly not! I don't allow—my-self—to—rust! I—keep—up—thor'ly—with—the—world—I—am—pash-'nate-ly—de-voted—to—dancing in—all—its forms——"

Robert swayed and slid and darted sensationally; he clasped her with abandon; his work grew harder and harder, and he panted more and more distressfully; he struck out with longer steps; he lunged; he whirled—he was not going to fall a whit behind modernity. The lady in black laughed and laughed; she grimaced daintily at people as she hurried by them; people laughed and laughed, and through his failing senses and failing breath Robert gasped enjoyably:

"This—is—a—hap-py-go-lucky sort of—show! I like happy-go-luck—I always—keep—*au—courant*—with the——"

Quite right," said the lady with languid ease. "Sure you're not getting at all out of breath?"

"Out—of—breff'" exclaimed Robert with a last great effort. "I—could—go—for—ever—dan-cing—with—you!"

"Then," said the serpent, "let's reverse. Do you reverse?"

"I—should—ad-ore—re-versing—with—you—fair—lady——"

Robert then lent himself passionately if helplessly to a strange, wilful, and headlong motion with which he was fatally unfamiliar.

The room swam; people hit him like cannon-balls and rebounded: the ceiling crashed inexorably upon them.

Robert fell down.

Not only did Robert fall, but he carried the lady with him wrapped in his arms, from which a stranger, an interloping puppy, snatched and rescued her.

The Hullo! Club laughed and laughed.

Robert sat on the floor.

A sound separated itself from other sounds and penetrated to his brain; it was the wave upon wave of this laughter.

Robert looked up.

People sat or stood writhing with merriment; the lady in black, encircled by the arm of the interloping puppy, writhed in merriment.

A great fact stole to Robert's senses, and first shattered, then collected, them.

"*I am being laughed at!*"

Robert arose carefully and with pain, dusted his trouser-knees, and gazed haughtily around him. A second sensation then assailed him; the sensation that some small boys experience after a party: it was his supper attacking his gastric region, which had not been so abused these twenty years.

The lady in black was exclaiming between her attacks of laughter:

"At your age, you dear soul, you shouldn't! You really shouldn't! Oh! oh! oh! Did anybody *ever* see s-s-such a spectacle!"

Robert did not speak, and it was better that he should not. Carefully he looked around, and he saw one face lit with the light of complete sympathy and comprehension.

It was the face of the bar-tender, who had already mixed a brandy-and-soda.

Robert approached him with rather toddling steps received the glass from his hand, and sipped. And while he stood by the bar in the Hullo! Club the angel on point duty there that night—a male with a wideish experience in both worlds—came and whispered kindly:

"Robert, old lad, go home. Be guided by me. I *know*. Better be first in a little Iberian village than second in Rome."

With rather toddling steps Robert left the Hullo! Club, and, *vià* a taxicab, sought Hetty.

Never in his twenty previous visits had the bedroom in the quiet hotel appeared nicer or more homely. The fire burnt low when he let himself in, a grateful silence reigned, the dress Hetty reserved for London wear hung over a chair back, and in the bed reposed the most appreciative and sincerely admiring of women, before whom, at least, he had always been great.

She spoke.

"Is John quite well?"

"Yes, Hetty."

"Are his wife and family quite well?"

"Yes, Hetty."

She then spoke once more, words which sent the escort angel aloft again with a new traveller's tale up his wing:

"To-morrow, Robert, you must go to your tailor and be measured for a new dress-suit. I was comparing you with other gentlemen at Reade's, and you look rather old-fashioned, my dear. Your coat's not what it was, and your trousers are much too tight."

A SOLUTION.

People prate of the terrible price
Of muslin and silk and voile,
Of the yards it takes to make their gowns,
And the ease with which they soil.
They can make the skirts as full as they please,
It won't bother me a jot;
For I'm starting work on the land, you see,
And I'm going to wear—you know what!

D. F.

CAP and BELLS

HINTS ON ECONOMY

From various well-known sources

Never waste a bad egg. Bad eggs are renowned for their marvellous chemical properties; and the country is threatened with a serious shortage of drugs. Take *your* bad eggs to the nearest doctor; he will know what to do with them.

❖ ❖ ❖

Never waste the dirty dish-water. It should be sprinkled over the kitchen garden, where it will greatly improve the flavour of the vegetables, besides adding perceptibly to their nutritive qualities.

❖ ❖ ❖

Never waste a banana skin. Bananas should always be eaten in their skins, or half their food value escapes. It is amazing how many people still remain in ignorance of this obvious fact.

❖ ❖ ❖

Never waste a bottle. There is already an increasing demand for all kinds of bottles, especially between the hours of 12 noon and 2.30 p.m.

❖ ❖ ❖

A correspondent writes asking what should be done with blackbeetles. A French housewife would, no doubt, be able to make a delicious soup out of these; but British prejudice is very hard to overcome. In the meantime they should not be discouraged, as a use will probably be found for them before long.

❖ ❖ ❖

Never waste a dead cat. Have you ever thought what would happen in the event of invasion?

❖ ❖ ❖

And finally: Never waste your time and temper listening to well-to-do people telling you how to save the money you haven't got.

* * * * *

UNREMITTING.

"Do you call it kindness for a man to go away from his family and never send them a farthing?"

"Yes, I should call it unremitting kindness."

HOUSE FULL.

VISITANT. "I'm terribly worried. Dear Reggie is coming home on leave, and he tells me he has captured seven Germans. Now I really haven't the faintest idea what to do with them."

* * * * *

PAST AND PRESENT.

In bygone days some poet wrote,
What many say is true,
"'Tis absence makes the heart grow fond,"
And once I thought so, too.

But since I've known you, Geraldine,
My hard-up state now shows
That I was wrong for your dear heart
With *arrears* ten or grows.

WILL PARKYN.

* * * * *

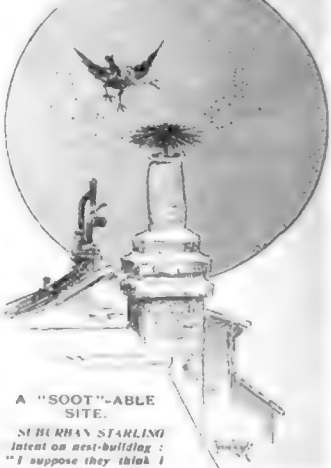
EVERYTHING IN KEEPING.

MABEL (to young widow): "Blanche, are you going to accept Mr. Oldboy?"

BLANCHE: "Yes, I think so."

MABEL: "Why he's three times as old as you are."

BLANCHE: "But he does harmonize so beautifully with my antique furniture!"



A "SOOT"-ABLE SITE.

SUBURBAN STARLING intent on nest-building: "*I suppose they think I need encouragement.*"

ALL-ROUND GOODNESS.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER: "You must grow up to be good. Don't you want to be looked up to?"

LITTLE GRACIE GLADEYE: "No. I'd rather be looked round at."

* * * * *

NOTHING ESCAPED HIM.

"So," said the old general, "you think you would make a good valet for an old wreck like me, do you? I have a glass eye and a wooden leg, not to mention false teeth and so forth."

"Oh, that's all right, sir," replied the applicant enthusiastically. "I've had lots of experience. I worked for six years in the assembling department of a motor-car factory."

AN UNKIND THRUST.

An art patroness was gushing over a portrait in the presence of the artist.

"I do not know how it is," she said, "but when you paint a portrait you seem to put more into it than anyone else can see."

"Madam," he exclaimed in a rhapsody, "it is not faces alone that I paint—it is souls!"

"Oh," she replied cuttingly, "you do interiors, do you?"

* * * *

SHEER FUNK.

GREY: "The trouble with a bore is one never knows what to do with him."

JONES: "Not at all. The trouble is, one's always afraid to do it."

SOME · SCOUT · LAWS
JUST MY LUCK! I NEVER HAD A CHANCE LIKE THIS BEFORE I JOINED THE SCOUTS.
A SCOUT'S HONOUR IS TO BE TRUSTED.
"TAKE A SEAT, SIR."
A SCOUT IS COURTEOUS.
THIS CAKE WILL MAKE FATHER ILL. I'LL CONFISCATE IT.
A SCOUT IS LOYAL.
A SCOUT SMILES & WHISTLES UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES.
SWAG
A SCOUT'S DUTY IS TO BE USEFUL AND TO HELP OTHERS.
"CLEAR OUT!"
A SCOUT OBEYS ORDERS.

HIS LAWFUL OCCUPATION.

MAGISTRATE (to prisoner): "What is your occupation?"

PRISONER: "I am a locksmith, your worship."

"And how came you to be found in a gambling house? What were you doing when the police appeared?"

"Making a bolt for the door."

* * * * *

BADLY EDUCATED.

Said the waiter to a noisy card party in a hotel bedroom: "I've been sent to ask you to make less noise, gentlemen. The gentleman in the next room says he can't read."

"Tell him," was the reply of the host, "that he ought to be ashamed of himself. Why, I could read when I was five years old."

FOOTING THE BILL.

"My dear," said the eminent surgeon's wife, "I shall need a new motor-coat this summer."

"All right," said the great man. "I'll look over my list and find someone who can afford an operation."

* * * * *

SWANK!

Mrs. O'Toole was shopping in the village when she caught sight of a signboard outside a cottage, with the following inscription: "Washing and ironing done."

"Wud ye look at that!" she exclaimed indignantly. "'Washing and ironing done,' indade. Oi've had me washing and ironing done since yesterday, but you don't see me hanging out a signboard bragging about it!"

A PAIR OF THEM.

A squad of recruits were getting rid of some ammunition on the range the other day, and the sergeant in charge began to use strong language as the firing proceeded and the target remained untouched.

"What! Missed again?" he roared, as an unfortunate recruit cut up the dust for the seventh consecutive time. "I don't believe you could hit a furniture van."

"Oh, you needn't crow, sergeant," retorted the recruit; "you missed a train yesterday."

* * * * *

AN INVISIBLE SPRAIN.

We were at the tea table. Next to me sat little Ethel. In the midst of the meal an audible swallow attracted my attention. I looked at Ethel, who was replacing her cup of tea on the table with one hand, while the other hand clasped her throat.

"What is the matter?" I queried.

"I—I tried to swallow too much tea at a time and I almost sprained my swallow."

* *

DOGGED DOES IT.

Spink, while cycling down a very narrow lane, encountered a large flock of bleating sheep.

For a space he wobbled successfully.

Finally, however, he was obliged to dismount.

A problem vexed his mind.

"Look here," he said, addressing the shepherd, "what on earth do you do when, driving a flock of sheep along a narrow road like this, you meet another flock coming in the opposite direction?"

"Well," answered the man, "ye just drive straight on, both of ye, and the one that has the best dog gets the most sheep!"

* * * * *

KEEP IT QUIET.

A pretty governess was remonstrating with her young hopeful, aged eight, on the grounds of his incorrigible laziness, endeavouring to impress him with the seriousness of his offence.

"You must remember also, Dick," she continued, "that you've got to work while you are young if you want to be a successful man when you grow up. Look at your father, for instance. Why do you think he stays late at his office three or four hours every week?"

Dick looked up suddenly.

"D'you know, Miss Payne?" he exclaimed.

"Of course I do," she replied.

"Well," he muttered, as he drove his hands deeper into his pockets, "you keep it to yourself. It mother got to know there'd be a nice old row."

A HURRIED PARTING.

"Oh, stop!" the maiden wildly cried,
Such treatment seemed unfair,
He took no notice of her words,
And left her standing there.

She pleaded once again, alas!
Her efforts were in vain;
He'd gone off in the greatest haste,
And would not come again.

She watched him in the distance, and
He soon was out of sight;
The 'bus-conductor could not see
The maiden that dark night.

Dorothy Harrison.

* * * * *

A GENTLE REMINDER.

Smith is a young lawyer, clever in many ways, but very forgetful. He was recently sent on a journey to interview an important witness in regard to a case then pending in the law courts. Later the head of the firm received this telegram:

"Have forgotten name. Please wire at once."

The reply sent was: "Witness' name Jenkins. Your name Smith."

* *

A TOUGH PROPOSITION.

YOUTHFUL FOLLIES.

The old age pension officer was questioning an old lady with a zeal worthy of a nobler result.

"And now," he said, "we have come to the important question. Have you ever been in receipt of parish relief?"

"Never," answered the old lady.

Foiled, the officer turned to the last question on the list. "Tell me," he snarled, "have you ever been in the hands of the police?"

"Well," she said, "I don't see as it's any business of the Government, but in my young days I was a cook, and, you know, girls will be girls; but still"—proudly—"he was a sergeant!"

* * * * *

A BAD SHOT.

A good story is told of a sporting gentleman who entered a restaurant and ordered a chicken.

The chicken was evidently tough, for when the waiter came in he beheld the gentleman in a great state of wrath.

"Waiter," he said, "this chicken is very tough."

"Very sorry, sir. That chicken was always a peculiar bird. Why, when we came to kill it we couldn't catch it, so at last we had to shoot it. It flew on the housetops, and——"

"Ah, by Jove! that accounts for it. You must have shot the weathercock by mistake."

NO EXEMPTION—EVEN FOR THE WAR LORD

Little trifles which all the armies of the Kaiser cannot prevent annoying him

GEORGE ASKED FOR IT.

She was surprised when she heard of the engagement, and she showed it.

"Why, I was perfectly satisfied in my own mind that you liked Tom better than George," she said.

"Well, to tell the truth, I did," replied the engaged girl.

"But you say you are engaged to George?"

"Yes, that's true."

"Well, I don't understand it at all."

"Why, it's very simple. You see George was the one who proposed."

KIND-HEARTED LADY: "And have you lost your mother, my dear?"
PRECOCIOUS CHILD: "No. It's my auntie. I told the silly old hen she was sure to leave go of me—and here I am!"

NO USE FOR IT.

TRAMP: "Would you please give me a bit to eat, ma'am? I've just come out of gaol."

LADY: "You should be ashamed to own it."

TRAMP: "I don't own it, ma'am; if I did, I'd sell it."

UP-TO-DATE METHODS.

Mary, a small but up-to-date maiden, had been to tea for the first time with the new neighbours next door. And, from all accounts, the little girl there had not been at all generous in permitting Mary to share her playthings.

"Well," said Mary's mother, when she heard all about it, "if anybody had treated me like that when I was a little girl, I should have come straight home."

The child of to-day shrugged her small shoulders as she answered:

"Ah! Things have changed since your day, mother. I slapped her face and stayed."

* * * *

FORESIGHT.

He wanted the picture hung to the right; she wanted it on the left. But he insisted that the servant should hang the picture according to his orders. Consequently Joseph stuck a nail in the wall on the right, but this done, he also stuck another in on the left.

"What is that second nail for?" his master inquired in astonishment.

"It's to save me the trouble of fetching the ladder to-morrow when you will have come round to the views of madam," was the reply.

* * * *

A NARROW ESCAPE.

"Yes," said the young singer, complacently, "I had a great reception after my song last night. The audience shouted, 'Fine! fine!'"

"Good thing you didn't sing again," said the cynic.

"What do you mean?"

"They wouldn't have let you off with a fine. It would have been imprisonment."

THE SMALL GIRL: "Uncle, couldn't you lend me one of your Lieutenants occasionally? Jackie's knowledge of military games is so limited."

SEVEN DAYS.

By F. E. Baily.

When Mary undertook a romantic pilgrimage into Surrey on her beloved motor-cycle she little dreamt what was before her. How she schemed for the happiness of two misguided souls, and became a temporary *fiancée* herself, is delightfully told in the following story.

I.—Saturday.

Mary Gray, supine within her pink and white bed, in the pink and white bedroom of the most perfect little flat in Portland Place, extended one white, beautiful arm revealed by the wide sleevelet of an adorable pink *crêpe-de-Chine* nightie, for a fragile cup of early morning tea.

Within the adjacent boudoir, carried out in old rose and black, separated from Mary only by a folding partition, Celandine, the perfect maid, prepared the breakfast table. From the bathroom certain aqueous sounds proclaimed that a warm and scented flood foamed into a Roman bath.

Mary, sighing the independent sigh of a young person whose unearned income totals one thousand a year, skimmed lazily through that lightest of sheets, *Daily Doings*, which, putting forward the events of the moment in pictures, renders mental fatigue a nightmare of the past. The portrait of a gentleman caught and held her golden-shot brown eyes. Tossing back the unruly masses of her golden-brown hair, she read such beautiful phrases as it seemed good to the caption

editor to place beneath his artistic colleague's production.

"The Hon. Bevil Hollyer," she murmured, "inventor of the Hollyer machine gun, entering his car to proceed to the new works at Guild Hill, where the weapon is to be manufactured under his supervision. The gun marks a new era in military history."

"Um," commented Mary aloud, gazing thoughtfully at the Hon. Bevil's picture. "I shouldn't have connected you with anything so bluggy as a machine gun. You've got the sad, interesting face and mild eye of a student, Bevil. You seem to be driving a 60 h.-p. Archangel chassis with a couple of bucket seats tied on in front and a few planks behind to make a luggage platform. I should like to meet you, and I don't suppose I ever shall."

Mary replenished the cup, and sipped thoughtfully.

"I love Guild Hill. There is a charming hotel in the middle of the famous High Street. It's on the way to Sussex, too. I daresay Bevil stays at the Golden Eagle; there's nowhere else to stay. The man attracts me. Never in my life have I taken a solitary step in pursuit of one, but twenty-two is a great age, and a beginning must be made. Why not potter down to Guild Hill?"

She drew up her knees lazily, and sat swinging her legs over the edge of the bed. Then, thrusting her feet into little pink satin *mules*, she fled to the bathroom crying:

"Celandine, Celandine, ring up the garage and tell them to have the Douglas round by ten. And shove 'Pale Hands I Love' on the gramophone, please. I am making a romantic pilgrimage, and it affords the necessary inspiration."

Mary was a passionate motor-cyclist.

With the respectable appetite of the modern girl, she wrought havoc amid the breakfast dishes. Then, lighting one of Alexandr Alexandrovitch's peerless Russian cigarettes, she wandered back into the bedroom, cold-creamed her face, and assumed a silken scarf, a long, belted, tan coat, an oil-silk hood, goggles, and gauntlets. The purr of a well-tuned engine called her to the hall door. Celandine strapped a dressing-case to the carrier of the Douglas—a man's model. A swing into the saddle, a deft manipulation of the clutch, and Mary was sweeping down Portland Place and along Oxford Street, bound for Surrey and Guild Hill.

Painters have limned and poets have sung the glories of a journey by road from London to this ancient country town.

Mary glided down its steep, historic High Street to the accompaniment of ominous misfiring from the faithful engine. With chastened enthusiasm she turned into the garage of the Golden Eagle, the hotel blessed unanimously by the motoring associations, and proceeded thence to wash and take luncheon.

It was outside the Golden Eagle that the Hon. Bevil Hollyer had been photographed for *Daily Doings*. Within the garage Mary noted the half-clad chassis of his car. At a table not remote from hers she perceived the thin, rather pale face and introspective eyes of the inventor; his clothes, once good, now hung upon him unloved and uncared for; his thoughts obviously roamed far away. Even Mary's perfect oval face could not lure them back.

Unmoved by the callousness of Mr. Hollyer, she made her way successfully through an excellent meal, and meditated afterwards over a cup of the usual coffee. Then, lazily, she wandered back to the garage to assuage the troubles of the Douglas.

The agitation of the kick-starter producing only occasional explosions, Mary sighed and would have commenced investigations when a grave, quiet voice behind her said:

"Please excuse me, but I have some knowledge of these matters. The ignition appears to be at fault. If you would allow me——"

She rose gracefully, to perceive Mr. Hollyer standing beside her in a disgraceful old overcoat and a soft felt hat long a stranger to its birthplace in Piccadilly.

"Thank you very much," murmured Mary, smiling gratefully.

She watched him experiment with long, sensitive fingers. A slight frown creased his brow. Finally he traced the fault to a broken carbon brush in the magneto.

"I fear it means a new one," he said, holding up the part, speaking simply, as to a child. "This—er—thing is vital to the ignition, you know. You won't get a spark without it."

"I really understand," she told him gently. "I do all my own running repairs."

"Dear me, do you, indeed?" commented Mr. Hollyer with great respect. "Perhaps you would accept a lift in my car. I should be delighted if——"

"I wasn't going anywhere in particular,

but I should love a run in that car. She looks as if she could move."

Mr. Hollyer did not actually smile, but his expression lightened visibly. He handed Mary into one bucket seat and got into the other himself. With velvet skill he edged the big Archangel out into the High Street.

"She is a little inclined to wag her tail," he explained apologetically. "I usually have a few odds and ends of metal on those planks at the back. However——"

Almost sadly he picked his way out of the town and opened out the car until Mary, a hardened sinner, clung, pale and frightened, to her inadequate seat. Mr. Hollyer slowed a little.

"You need feel no alarm," he bellowed mildly. "I have had a certain amount of racing experience at Brooklands—not for the sake of it, but merely to test a carburettor idea of mine."

"Good heavens, what a car!" stammered Mary, wiping her streaming eyes, for there was no wind-screen.

Mr. Hollyer checked the car still further. Conversation became easier.

"Are you staying long?" he inquired, becoming every moment less of a recluse. "I ask because I am going now to see the Brigadier. The Staff is giving a dance on Tuesday in return for local hospitality. It occurs to me you might perhaps care to come. My name is Hollyer, by the way. I'm doing Government work down here."

"I am Mary Gray," explained the passenger. "I'd love to stay for the dance. Are you the man who's invented a machine gun? I saw your picture in the paper this morning."

"Yes, and they're building me a shop to make it in. I'm glad you'll stay. The Brigadier will be glad as well. The local maidens are not exactly goddesses."

"No?" said Mary.

"I've got some people coming down for it," pursued her new friend, who began to look no more than his twenty-seven years. "My *fiancée* and her brother."

He sighed. One gathered he was not overjoyed at the prospect of the betrothed.

"How very nice for you," said Mary.

The Brigadier gave them tea. His eye and that of his Brigade Major gladdened at the sight of Mr. Hollyer's new friend. She became in the briefest possible time the guest of the Staff for the following Tuesday evening. Then Mr. Hollyer returned her in triumph to their hotel.

For the first time in nearly a fortnight he did not dine alone. The most patriarchal of head-waiters watched over his table, set for a *dîner à deux* with Mary. Mr. Hollyer wore dress clothes of respectable descent, but faded charm. Mary arranged her beautiful, enthusiastic self in a little, plain, appealing gown suited to the slaughterous times. They knew they were both interested; that mysterious wireless of two sympathetic natures had long ago flung out its call. Their meal became a poem. They blossomed and expanded for one another.

"It has been very delightful," sighed Mary happily over her coffee. The fragrance of their cigarettes blended. A little food, a little wine—youth—the hackneyed yet ever delightful miracle had occurred again.

"When people are happy one asks favours," declared Mr. Hollyer. "I will ask one now. I have to motor to Southampton to-morrow to see the military forwarding officer. Do come, too. We can picnic on the way. It's not very far."

Mary leant forward, dreamy and delighted. "Thank you," she murmured, a little sleepy with fresh air and exercise. "I should love to. What time do we start?"

II.—Sunday.

"I suppose," hazarded Mary, nestling into the collar of Mr. Hollyer's Burberry, lent for the occasion, as the naked Archangel ate up the Hog's Back, "machine guns are dreadfully serious things."

"In the important matter of control of fire," declared her host authoritatively, "the machine gun has several advantages. Once the gun is loaded and laid, fire can be turned on or off instantaneously; it can be directed as readily as required, and can be distributed laterally by traversing."

"Um! And does Lady Virginia Stanmore, your *fiancée*, take a great interest in the gun?"

"Virginia is very young—twenty, to be exact. She hardly appreciates serious matters. She is very pretty, and expects a great deal of admiration. Sometimes I wonder if we are altogether suited. I don't quite know——"

"I expect you bore her a bit," explained Mary gently. "If you let out chunks of the Young Soldier's Guide to the Machine Gun like you did to me just now and expect her to say thank you, you're making a sad mistake. You ought to admire her frock, her eyes, or something, and give her chocolates, and tell her she's a darling. Girls like it."

"Do they *really*?"

"You don't mind if I call you Bevil, do you? No? You see, you are the only genius I ever met, but you're so pathetically young at the same time. I daresay you seem a childish infant to Lady Virginia. She must have an awful job bringing you up."

He snorted harshly at the fair place called Alton.

"I am twenty-seven. Virginia is a mere slip of a girl."

"There are no mere slips of girls," retorted Mary. "On the other hand, all men are children. What you call slips of girls mother them."

"Joking aside, I wish Virginia and I weren't getting further and further apart. I suppose it's inevitable. She loves admiration and gets it. I'm always busy with my gun. No doubt I should do well to break the engagement."

"Let us lunch and settle your future," she suggested.

They fed daintily, sitting upon a green bank. The Hon. Bevil ministered with delicate subservience to his delicious guest. Mary pitied him a little, and behaved very charmingly. She pictured this gentle, dreamy inventor of a super-efficient murder-machine being bullied by some robust, open-air, matter-of-fact ex-flapper, and sighed over the callous brutality of life.

"I wish I could get on with Virginia as well as I do with you," observed the Hon. Bevil regretfully. It was pitiful to see any lover so overcome by his betrothed.

They pursued their flower-strewn path to the military forwarding officer and back. Mary, dewy-eyed with sympathy, used all her arts to be beautiful for him at dinner. Afterwards she smoked a cigarette in his sitting-room, and wandered thoughtfully to the piano.

"I will sing to you just once, Bevil," she said. "I've only got a little voice, but, thank Heaven, I don't try to be a *prima donna*."

It was the one touch wanting on a Sunday evening, with its faint inexplicable melancholy, after a joyful day and a good dinner—a pretty girl in a suitable frock singing softly to her own soft accompaniment:

> Light in the eyes I loved
> But yesterday!
> I hardly seem to know—
> It was so long ago—
> If they were black as night,
> Or blue, or grey;
> And yet I loved them so
> But yesterday!

Her fingers slipped from the keys, as if too overcharged with emotion to stay there any longer. They were silent for a long moment.

"Good-night, Bevil," breathed Mary at last, looking him full in the eyes for one impetuous second.

He held her hand in his through eternity, measured by his emotions. Then she had fluttered from the room, leaving him forlorn as a cherry stranded by the ebb tide of a cocktail that is consumed.

Mary, untying the ribbons of a cobwebby pink silk camisole embroidered with forget-me-nots, smiled a tender, reminiscent smile.

"Poor boy! He feels positively home-sick for something he couldn't describe if you offered him the moon. But it's awfully good for him. It'll help him to realise Virginia to-morrow."

III.—Monday.

Shortly before lunch Mary, seated, a picturesque figure, in the hotel lounge, beheld a sporting and apparently swift two-seated car draw up before the main entrance. From it descended a young and comely damsel of an exceedingly modern type, exhibiting all the dash and superiority proper to her twenty years. She wore an exceedingly modern suit of grey with black facings, peculiarly short in the skirt, and her cloth-topped boots matched it to a split hair.

This vision swaggered into the lounge, casting about her that contemptuous glance germane to maidens whose beauty lies in short, small-featured faces with noses that are quite straight, and small, pink mouths.

"Where's Mr. Hollyer?" she inquired of a waiter in the clear, penetrating, rather metallic voice of her type.

As if in answer to her prayers the Hon. Bevil descended the staircase, rather shabbier than usual. A tall, dark young officer strolled in at the front door coincidently, having garaged his joy-waggon; his eye lit on Mary and revived.

"Hullo, Bevil! Sloppy as ever!" continued Lady Virginia Stanmore, swinging her skirt from side to side in the modern restless way. "Can't we have lunch soon? I'm starved. Ronald's beastly car seems to have been all night getting here."

The Hon. Bevil smiled his quiet, rather patient smile, holding out a welcoming hand.

"You shall have everything in the world you want, Virginia dear. Hullo, Ronald, old thing! So pleased to see you both. May I present a friend—Miss Mary Gray? She,

also, is down for the Brigadier's dance. She consents to eat with me sometimes."

He scanned the meeting with a faintly anxious eye. Lord Ronald beamed enthusiastically. Mary smiled with polite interest. Lady Virginia stared frankly, and there was hostility in her glance.

"Well, do let's have some food," she insisted with monosyllabic impatience. "I want my lunch, I can tell you. It makes me cross to starve."

"Do you want to look in a glass first?" hazarded her *fiancé*. "What about a drink, Ronald?—Gin and bitters? Cocktail? No?"

"Oh, come on!" exhorted Lady Virginia, and led the way to the dining-room, giving her hair certain digs, and her face certain dabs with a minute powder-puff as she passed a long mirror. She appeared to model her deportment largely on that of the younger and more beautiful ornaments of our musical stage.

It was a fascinating meal. Lord Ronald paid Mary that quiet attention which says in unspoken words: "I am unspeakably attracted. Please believe I want to seem very nice to you." The Hon. Bevil emulated a dove bearing an olive branch, and Mr. Henry Ford. He ranged himself on the side of peace, knowing his Virginia. That young lady scarcely mellowed with food, and stared at Mary with hostile stares. She almost snorted when Mary and Bevil addressed one another by their Christian names.

"You seem to be quite old friends," she observed with adolescent irony.

"Time does not always affect the quality of friendship," explained Bevil mildly.

"I think we were born for one another, Bevil," cooed Mary, who was a cat herself, and had had nearly enough of Virginia.

"You make me feel frightfully lonely," complained his lordship. "Here is Bevil positively embarrassed with admiration. I alone am out in the cold. I think I shall fall upon my sword and die. How does one fall upon a sword?"

"Don't be such an ass, Ronald," snapped his sister. "What awful bosh you do talk. Can't I see you in peace after lunch, Bevil? I've got a lot to say to you."

"Have a cigarette in my sitting-room," he suggested.

"While we babble in the lounge," urged Lord Ronald. "Do drink your coffee with me in the lounge, Miss Gray. I feel so dreadfully like a chaperon with Virginia and Bevil on my hands."

Later, Mary, gazing thoughtfully from her end of a Chesterfield to his, said resignedly:

"I think I'd better get out my Douglas and go. I can see I'm a disturbing element. Frankly, Lord Ronald, your sister mistrusts me. She has put upon me a feeling of guilt I don't deserve. She considers I've flirted with Mr. Hollyer. Apart from the fact that I always call people by their Christian names if I like them——"

"Mine is Ronald," broke in her audience gently.

"—I'm perfectly innocent. Life is very hard, but in this case I can escape from hardship. Don't you agree?"

"No," replied Lord Ronald firmly, "I don't. I want to dance with you to-morrow evening if you'll let me. Virginia's in a bad temper. She ragged me all the way down, and I'll bet she's ragging Hollyer now. She gets too much admiration from infatuated subs. I don't believe she cares a bit about poor Bevil and yet he's frightfully decent to her, and absolutely a goner as far as she's concerned. In short, please stay. Think of me, with those two quarrelling like cats. Stay for my sake if not for your own."

"All right," said Mary. "I'll take you to the Mayoress' At Home for the Red Cross this afternoon. You will meet there the notable ladies of the neighbourhood. On the other hand, I shall acquire merit through having brought a man."

On the way to her room in search of a calling toilette from those sent down by Celandine, Mary passed the sitting-room of Mr. Hollyer. She could not help hearing certain words spoken in a clear, metallic tone:

". . . and not content with getting up a flirtation with a girl who's obviously an actress or something, you oblige me to meet her. Perfectly disgusting of you, Bevil."

"At least she took pains to be charming," came with some bitterness from the harassed lover. "I have indulged in no flirtation, and if I were to try, Miss Gray would never permit such a thing. But really, Virginia, your behaviour gives me every excuse."

Mary passed on smiling.

The quiet friendship of Lord Ronald ripened during the faint excitement of the Mayoress' At Home. It stayed Mary during a somewhat preoccupied dinner, to which the innuendoes of Virginia added no charm. That maiden, baulked of an active quarrel, sulked bitterly afterwards in Bevil's sitting-room, to which they all adjourned.

She made a great deal of her stockings and ate innumerable chocolates, biting at them and her *fiancé* alternately.

Captain Lord Ronald Stanmore more than made up for his sister.

IV.—Tuesday.

To create a certain effect and mature fitting vengeance, Lady Virginia chose to breakfast in her room. The Hon. Bevil departed early for the site of his new works. By subtraction, Mary and Lord Ronald breakfasted *tête-à-tête*.

There is a glow about people in the early morning, when man comes fresh from his bath and his razor, and woman exhibits a fascinating pinkness often natural, though sometimes issuant from a bottle or other receptacle.

"Good-morning, lady," said he, arranging a chair for her, adding by implication, "What a darling you look!"

"Good morning," she returned, smiling adorably out of her golden-shot brown eyes, adding by implication, "perhaps I do, but so are you in your way."

Perfectly happy, they fell to.

"Thank heaven we aren't in love," sighed Mary, *à propos* of nothing. "In consequence, we aren't obliged to quarrel. We can think instead how delightful we are. My dear Lord Ronald, the sun is shining. Let's go out, and leave our young friends to make it up. You haven't anything to do, have you? For goodness' sake don't do it if you have. Bevil and your sister make me ache. It's like watching people in chains."

"If you would give up calling me 'Lord' Ronald I would show you Sussex as seen from a sporting Thompson-Johnson," he replied courteously. "In view of something you said yesterday——"

"Very well, Ronald."

"I shall be delighted, Mary."

So all day long they glided through places like Ditchling and Billingshurst. Almost anyone could love in Sussex.

Late afternoon brought them home. Bevil bore off Lord Ronald to drink those savourless yet stimulating concoctions invented by men to give them courage for social functions. Mary corrupted an hotel maid, and proceeded to prepare herself for the delight of the Brigadier. It was a pleasant occupation; there is no woman but loves to be silk all through.

They dined eventually; Mary in wicked black to annoy Lady Virginia; Lady Virginia almost equally wicked in a tango-orange gown of marvellous effrontery; Bevil in weary evening dress; Lord Ronald in uniform, his slacks freshly and pitilessly ironed. A hireling limousine bore them to the entertainment. In the excitement of the moment, Lady Virginia forgot to be catty, and her lover smiled upon her like an embodied benediction. Lord Ronald spent the journey bargaining with Mary for all the waltzes.

It was an animated scene. Mary found herself floating over a perfect floor in the arms of the Brigadier, a relic of the days when men really learnt to dance, to the strains of "*Cœur Déchiré*," not the least passionate of waltzes. Bevil found himself foisted upon the daughter of a high local official, who, if she had been a hunter—and yet in a sense she was—might have been described as a weight-carrier. Lady Virginia, having seen him for the first time, annexed a certain Mr. St. Vincent, also a soldier, for the remainder of the evening. He possessed smouldering blue eyes, and the air of one prone to strange kisses. It was what the Germans call a Hussar stroke.

At one a.m., Mary sat with Lord Ronald eating an ice in a certain sitting-out place. These had been constructed by the Brigade engineers, whose mottoes are *Ubique* and *Quo fas et gloria ducunt*.

Lord Ronald relieved her of her plate and spoon, placing them well out of the way.

"You are the only girl I ever loved," he said, as though he expected her to believe him.

"No doubt," observed Mary piously.

"It's true. I only thought I loved the others. You are like the first faint flush of dawn over the hills of Kashmir."

He curved an experienced arm as if to surround the perfect shoulders that rose out of her unobtrusively expensive gown. Mary placed the arm aside courteously.

"It sounds rather like the cheaper forms of stocking. In any case the remark is irrelevant. I am very worried about Bevil and your sister. I saw him drinking soda water, and she is inseparable from a certain youth called, I believe, St. Vincent. What is to be done?"

"Oh, them? They've broken it off. Virginia seems to be jealous of you. I don't wonder. You have four most disturbing dimples, Mary. Laugh, please, so that I can see them again."

In the confusion the arm delivered a counter attack, and encircled Mary. She did not appear to notice it, worried as she was about the Hon. Bevil and his unhappy love affair.

He bent to set the seal on his capture. Mary straightened herself with severity.

"Lord Ronald," she said, "I never allow anyone to kiss me until he has proposed."

"That," retorted Lord Ronald, "is a very sound idea. Mary darling, will you marry me? You know I love you. Anyone could see that, let alone you."

She turned to look at him, and her eyes smiled a little.

"No thank you, but I will be engaged to you till Friday. I think that ought to be long enough. By Friday, I mean, we can heal the difference between Virginia and Bevil. Then you and I can break it off."

"Well, that's a beginning anyway," commented the noble lord. "The rest, I suppose, is up to me. And now, I think, there is no cause or just impediment——"

Delicately he raised Mary's chin, and kissed her pink and perfect mouth.

Delicately he raised Mary's chin, and kissed her pink and perfect mouth.

In the distance the band commenced to play that incomparable waltz, "*Mille Baisers.*" It was an omen.

V.—Wednesday.

Mary and Virginia breakfasted in bed. At the luncheon hour they descended fresh as paint, such is the wondrous vitality of youth. It was a mournful meal, on account of the broken engagement, yet superficially joyous, on account of the new one just begun. Congratulations flowed sadly from Bevil, sarcastically from Virginia.

Afterwards, as the clear voice of her ladyship made affectionately over the telephone an assignation with Mr. St. Vincent, Mary spoke tersely and incisively to Bevil.

"All you have to do is to disappear. I will guarantee the result. Ronald and I can manage the rest. Just fade out of existence this afternoon, and don't come back till dinner-time to-morrow. And do buck up as well, and get some decent clothes, and bring the girl some pretty thing or other. It's really three-quarters your fault, my friend. You are just a bit of a stick-in-the-mud, aren't you?"

"Perhaps," sighed Bevil sadly. "After all, a machine gun is an exacting mistress. I doubt if I should have complicated things by adding a girl to my responsibilities. However, I will do as you say. You know best."

He wandered out into the afternoon heavy-hearted.

Virginia scarcely perceived his departure. Mr. St. Vincent motored her somewhere to tea. Ronald and Mary tramped happily over the local hills, she with a diamond ring on her engagement finger. He had insisted on providing it.

Mr. St. Vincent accepted a pressing invitation to dinner. Bevil's absence passed unnoticed. Afterwards, all four attended the local cinema in a spirit of mild derision.

Returning, Mary and Virginia retired early, leaving Mr. St. Vincent to bore Lord Ronald over a whisky-and-soda.

VI.—Thursday.

Mary, awaking from her rosy dreams, sent by the hand of the maid who brought morning tea, a note to Lord Ronald. Ten minutes later they met on the neutral ground of a first-floor landing—he in pale-blue silk pyjamas, she slender and adorable in a pink silk wrap. His eyes rested a moment on her bare feet in their little pink *mules*.

"Listen," she told him. "I'm going to talk to Virginia. Later, you must come into her room and announce the disappearance of Bevil. He has disappeared. I told him to, as I daresay he explained to you. Be as pale and dishevelled as you can. Rumple your hair, you know—like this." She ran her fingers through his brown locks, and fled.

She found Virginia propped up in bed, with tea and cigarettes at her elbow, engrossed in an ardent work of fiction entitled "Twelve Months." Her hair tied with tango-orange bows hung in two plaits, and she wore a black silk night-gown.

"Morning," said Virginia, staring frankly. "I like your pink rig-out. I think I shall wear pink when I'm married. Black's all very well for an effect, but it feeds one up after a time. What'll you have—gaspers or Gyppies?"

She pushed forward the cigarette box, and laid down "Twelve Months." Her friendliness came almost as a shock. The pink silk seemed to have melted her.

Mary lit a highly-scented cigarette, such as the female young love, and sat down on the bed.

"I just came in to jaw for a minute," she asserted casually, suiting her vocabulary to her audience. "Topping day, what? Got anything on this morning?"

Virginia frowned.

"No. Of course, Bevil's off, and St. Vincent can't get away. I'm sick of this hole. They want me to sell programmes at a charity *mat.* at the Imperial to-morrow. I think I shall clear out."

A tap on the door announced Lord Ronald. He came in, feigned surprise at seeing Mary, apologised, was forgiven, and addressed his sister in tones of alarm.

"I say, Vingie, where's Bevil?"

"How should I know?"

"Well, I thought you might. Anyway, he's disappeared—skinned right out and never said a word. The hotel people don't know anything. His bed hasn't been slept in. The foreman at the works"—here Lord Ronald invented shamelessly—"has been ringing up and simply playing the devil on the telephone."

"What an ass Bevil is!" commented Virginia, faintly alarmed.

"Well," said her brother piously, "I hope you won't have anything on your conscience, Vingie. I dare say if you'd treated the poor chap decently, instead of being a little beast to him, he'd be here now. I'm very fond of Bevil, and, if anything's—happened, I shall blame you for it. He's one of those deep, silent blighters; he'd never complain—simply perish off the earth and let it go at that."

Lord Ronald turned away and kicked moodily at the fender. Mary looked up at him with big eyes of apprehension.

"This is really rather serious. What shall we do, Ronald?"

"I don't know. We don't want the police messin' about. Better ring up his clubs and the War Office and all that, I s'pose. Hope it doesn't get into the papers, that's all."

Virginia's face had paled. Now she burst out angrily:

"Well, go and do something, Ronald! Don't pose there in front of the grate like an idiot! Go away! I'm going to get up."

"Oh, very well," he snorted, and left her, lowering one eyelid faintly at Mary from the door.

Virginia lay plucking at the sheet, as dying people in works of fiction pluck at the counterpane.

"What d'you think's happened?" she queried at length. "I know Bevil was frightfully keen on me. One does know these things, doesn't one?"

Mary nodded gravely, as one woman to another.

"I was beastly jealous of you when I came down. You've got such a ripping figure, and you're a bit older than me, but not old enough to matter from your point of view."

Again Mary nodded, still gravely.

"Oh—oh—hang young St. Vincent!" ended Virginia, and a tear trickled out of one eye. She flung "Twelve Months" across the room, wriggled out of bed, and peered gauntly into a looking-glass.

"This anxiety is making me look a positive hag!" she groaned. "I'm afraid I really *shall* have to use a little colour to-day, although I don't believe in it, do you?"

"I expect I'd better dress," murmured

She found Virginia propped up in bed . . . engrossed in an ardent work of fiction entitled "Twelve Months."

Mary non-committally, and fled to her room, gurgling with laughter as soon as it was safe.

All the weary day, during which no news came of Bevil, Mary behaved to Virginia like a true sister. She comforted her at breakfast; she accompanied her for a walk during the morning; she supported her at lunch. By tea-time Virginia could see nothing but bodies floating down the river, mangled remains under trains, and corpses still grasping revolvers with an exploded cartridge in one chamber. Lord Ronald preserved a pained aloofness. He, too, grieved for the loss of a friend.

Precisely ten minutes before dinner, the Hon. Bevil Hollyer, clad in the height of fashion, entered the Golden Eagle and proceeded to his room. There he put on a new dress-suit kings might have envied, and sought the dining-room, bearing in one hand an enormous box of chocolates and in the other a small case such as jewellers employ as a casket for jewellery.

He burst upon the assembled three like a high-explosive shell.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Lord Ronald, leaping up. "Where the blazes did you come from?"

"Bevil! Then you aren't dead!" cried Virginia, and grasped his arm, ignoring the waiter.

"What a fuss—what a fuss!" protested the wanderer. "I haven't been dying. I went to town on a shopping expedition. I look rather well, do I not? Here are two trifling gifts."

To Mary he handed the portmanteau of chocolate. Round the bare symmetry of Virginia's arm he clasped a bracelet of delicate platinum and diamonds.

"And I think," he said casually, yet with meaning—"I think I want to be engaged again, Virginia."

"So do I," said Virginia. "And I'm beastly hungry, too. Sit down, Bevil old thing, and let's have a gorge, since you *are* alive. And order some champagne to drink your health in. I need it. I'm fretted away to the bone."

VII.—Friday.

"I must depart," announced Mary. "Though how I'm to do it with a Douglas, a dressing-case, and a trunk, I don't know."

"Of course I shall take you up to Town," asserted Lord Ronald.

"I will lend you a motor-lorry from the works for your effects," said Bevil, who owed her a debt of gratitude.

So Lord Ronald drove her up in the two-seated Thompson-Johnson. In return she gave him dinner at her flat.

She had parted affectionately from Bevil and Virginia. Both promised to call on her in Portland Place some day. Now she sat drinking coffee with Lord Ronald in the tiny black and old-rose boudoir, smoking one of her favourite cigarettes.

There vibrated in the atmosphere that poignant sense of finality that comes after all pleasant things, as the savoury follows the sweet, in order to bring us back to the mediocrity of every day. Lord Ronald seemed to feel it. He fidgeted once in his chair, and his eyes drank in every inch of Mary, very sweet and pretty in the black gown she had worn at the Brigade dance.

She rose, threw away the end of her cigarette, and stood playing with the ring he had given her. Finally, she took it off and held it out to him.

"It was only play, wasn't it?" she said, "and now the game is over, and we aren't playing any longer. So I'd better put away the toy."

He stood up beside her.

"It's as you will, Mary," he answered, with a little smile, very affectionate and rather sad. "You said till Friday, and this is the end of Friday. You know how much I should love it to be for always. You're a very darling person, Mary. I love you very much. No girl has ever made me so happy as you have. Mayn't we carry on?"

She let him take her in his arms. After all, it was the last time.

"You're a dear thing, Ronald, but I don't love you enough. I like you, but I wouldn't suffer and be miserable for you. And that's the test of a woman's love—it has to be, as we're made. Good-night, dear."

She held up her mouth, and he kissed her for the last time. At the door of the flat he stood up very straight and saluted gravely. Then she shut the door, and he turned away.

Mary went back to the fire, filled with a pleasant melancholy. Her eyes were tender.

"Men are very nice," she murmured. Then, half-smiling, she opened the gramophone and inserted a record of "Pale Hands I Love." It was the epilogue of the play.

When the song had ended, she crept into her bedroom and undressed slowly. As she combed out the masses of her golden brown hair, the teeth of the comb caught in a tangle and pulled.

"It's like life," she told herself. "Even in the nicest things there's always a hurt somewhere. P'raps that's what makes them so nice."

She crept, a slender, pink figure, into bed. For a moment her eyes were thoughtful. Then she smiled.

"There'll be another delightful day to-morrow," she crooned happily.

The electric switch clicked, and soon, very soon, Mary was dreaming of mice.

(Next month Mary will entertain you with yet another delightful adventure.)

"The POULTICE-WALLAH"

By Leonard K. Unwin.

"Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' 'Tommy, 'ow's yer soul?'
But it's 'Thin red line of 'eroes' when the drum begins to roll."

He was a little man, with a heart at least two sizes larger than Nature had intended when drawing up specifications of the human frame. And in that sad circumstance lay his unspeakable tragedy, for six successive doctors had frowned on him when he had eloquently represented that he could serve the King best in a marching regiment.

He was doomed to be a "poultice-wallah," —the good-humouredly facetious nickname with which Mr. Thomas Atkins adorns the unobtrusive heroes of the R.A.M.C.—and all the time his ferocious soul panted to be in the thick of the fighting.

He had more indomitable courage to the cubic inch of his dumpy, under-sized structure than most of the eight feet giants of mythology. And yet he was simply Lance-Corporal Horace Blenkinsop of the R.A.M.C., in which splendid branch of the

service he performed prodigious deeds of valour most hours of the twenty-four, and didn't know it.

"'Nough ter give yer the perishin' 'ump," he growled fiercely as he picked his way gingerly from the dressing-station over the charnel house which lay between there and the trenches. He stopped suddenly and knelt by the side of a writhing khaki figure on the ground.

"'Ave a swig at this, cocky," he muttered with rough tenderness as he unslung his water bottle.

The pallid lips sucked greedily at the bottle whilst Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop skilfully performed all the soothing ministrations of first-aid.

"Knocked yer abart a bit, ole man, ain't they?" he said cheerfully. "But you chaps in the trenches 'ave orl the bloomin' fun."

"Looks like it, don't it?" grinned the patient as Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop lit a cigarette for him. "One continual round o' merriment, in a manner o' speakin'."

The R.A.M.C. man grunted.

"I'd like ter swop places with yer," he said wistfully, and signalled to a little squad of stretcher-bearers who advanced warily with a lively apprehension of falling shells.

It was then that the Great Idea was born. It rather frightened him at first, but it developed and grew as the day went on. He pondered on it with insistent longing, until at dusk he came to an immense resolution. He, Lance Corporal Horace Blenkinsop, loyal soldier of the Empire, was going to desert from the R.A.M.C.!

"Just abart 'ad enough of it, I 'ave," he confided to himself disgustedly. "Blimey, they can only court-martial me."

He stood up and shook a bony fist aggressively in the direction of the invisible German trenches.

"And look out for me, you perishers. One swipe at yer; that's orl I want!"

But for the occasional flare of rockets and the sinister pyrotechnics of big guns, it was dark when he stepped cautiously out of the barn which was the billet of the R.A.M.C. detachment. He moved off with the cunning of an Indian tracker into the enveloping gloom a couple of hundred yards away, and there he calmly sat down and with patient deliberation proceeded to cut off all the buttons and regimental badges on his tunic and cap.

"Bet I look a regular nut," he chuckled to himself as he walked unerringly across the three-quarters of a mile which separated him from the British first line trenches.

Twice on that exhilarating stroll he had to pitch himself ignominiously forward on the ground in an attitude of graceful abandon as shells shrieked their way across to meet him, and that abnormally sized organ underneath his narrow chest tangoed inside him with suffocating violence.

He blundered into a trench at last and collided with a something in uniform who inquired of him chattily where the deuce he thought he was going.

"It's orl right, ole sport," said Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop affably, just discerning in the surrounding inkiness that his genial questioner was a sergeant.

The Sergeant made a hasty movement with his feet as the Lance-Corporal stood peering amiably into his face.

"Look 'ere, you clumsy idiot, I don't mind you stepping on me feet, but I do object to yer loiterin' on 'em," he said irritably.

"Sorry. I'll ring me bell next time," said Blenkinsop with irrepressible cheerfulness.

The Sergeant made a funny noise with his mouth which had really no definite place in the scheme of articulation.

"What are yer doin' 'ere?" he demanded. "You ain't in our lot, are yer?"

"I'm lorst," said Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop illuminatively.

"Lorst, are yer?" snapped the Sergeant. "Well, yer silly blighter, yer'd better go and find yerself."

"Can't," persisted the deserter complacently. "I'm lorst."

The Sergeant gurgled impatiently.

"I don't know whether yer parents 'ud trust a careless bloke like you with a name, else you'd go and bloomin' well lose that, too. 'Ave yer by any chance got such a thing as a name abart yer?"

"Me name's Jones," replied Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop without a blush.

"Jones," repeated the Sergeant with savage facetiousness. "I seem to have 'eard that name somewhere before."

"P'raps it's me cousin you mean," said the other helpfully. "I'm Private George Jones."

"Thank yer," said the Sergeant with elaborate sarcasm. "At first I thought yer might be Colonel Jones."

The darkness hid Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop's deprecatory smile, for he was really a very modest little fellow, and had no wish to be taken for a colonel.

"Where are yer from?" demanded the Sergeant shortly.

"14th Woldshires," lied the Lance-Corporal readily.

"Well, where the blazes is yer clobber!" insisted the Sergeant, looking at the newcomer's figure, which was shorn of all the usual haversack, belt, and other impedimenta.

"Lorst it," said Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop cheerfully.

"Well, of all the blanketty dash——"

A really interesting display of garnished English, as used in the best trench circles, was unfortunately temporarily cancelled as an alert-faced young officer moved down the trench towards them.

"Stop that talking," he whispered warningly. "Sergeant, have all your men ready. We shall be at them in ten minutes."

The Sergeant drew up stiffly.

"Yessir."

When the hazy figure of the Captain had passed he turned perplexedly to his companion.

"Blest if I know what the deuce I'm goin' ter do with you," he muttered fiercely.

"Gimme a gun and some cartridges, Sergeant, and don't you worry abart me," said the Lance-Corporal, who for the first time had terrifying visions of being clapped under guard.

"I s'pose you know how ter use a rifle?" said the Sergeant facetiously. "Yer can only fire from one end, yer know."

"Got medals for shooting, I 'ave," retorted Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop briskly.

The Sergeant hesitated for a moment. Then he groped his way down the trench, and came back with a rifle, pouches, and belt.

"'Ere y'are. Shove 'em on quick," he snapped, "and get up there. I'll deal with you when this little excursion's over."

With feverish fingers the little deserter accoutred himself for the fray, and snuggled up luxuriously against the parapet of the trench. That wretched overgrown organism of his was again asserting itself unpleasantly. For Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop had never handled a Service rifle before!

His nearest approach to Bisley had been occasional trips into the hilarious joys of "three shots a penny" at shooting booths on giddy Hampstead Heath, firing at those elusive balls which gyrate jerkily on the tip of little spurting streams of water. And on the last occasion, he recalled gloomily, he had very nearly shot the proprietor's eye out.

"Glory, I'm in for it proper this time," he muttered as he cautiously loaded his rifle.

An eternity seemed massed in that ten minutes. His fingers quivered on the rifle, and he found himself damp with perspiration.

A hoarse whisper passed down the trench —"Ready"—and he shivered violently. He and the other dusky forms on each side of him stood crouching behind the works, stern-faced and grim.

Suddenly, from behind, hell was let loose. A pandemonium of shells, howling their song of Death, burst out from the British artillery trenches, miles to the rear in the curtain of darkness. Someone shouted, "Come on, lads!" and mechanically Lance Corporal Blenkinsop scrambled over the parapet.

He hurled himself forward with the others and panted frenziedly across the two hundred yards where a thousand rifles crackled and lit up the night like a ghastly firework show. Then a thousand demons seemed to leap up and rush to meet the shouting, singing khaki line. At sight of them Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop's little body quaked pitifully. The pathetic remains of his strung-up courage seemed to vanish into his puttees, and the only coherent thought he had was how nice it would be to lie down until all the noise and smell had been cleaned up.

He looked down, and, to his surprise, he found his legs moving. A few yards further on he was no less astonished to find that a mouth, which could only have been his own, was raucously bawling a music-hall ditty: "Oh, I do Like to be Beside the Seaside." And then something stumbled against him in front. In his annoyance he jabbed viciously at it with his bayonet, and the clumsy obstruction fell down with an unmusical yell, and Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop saw that it was a German.

"One!" he shouted gleefully, and then his arithmetic failed him because the multiplication table got very confused after that.

There was a tremendous scrimmage at the German trench. It was like a fantastic football match to see the mass of swaying bodies.

"Better than Chelsea and Fulham," he shouted wildly, his face black with smoke and sweat.

A machine gun was spurting out death to the left of him. He looked round excitedly, his bloodshot eyes gleaming savagely, as the eyes of a peaceful R.A.M.C. man had no right to gleam. He waved his rifle frantically.

"Come on, boys. We'll settle that

swine," he yelled, but no one heard him in that noisy inferno. He crept forward stealthily and entrenched himself behind two bodies. Something inside him framed a prayer as he aimed carefully at the men behind the gun only a few yards away. Two shots went pathetically wide. He clenched his teeth viciously and fired again. Two arms flung up in the air, a body curveted grotesquely and fell limply into the yawning trench behind.

Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop leapt up and dashed wildly at the surviving gunner. There was no time for firing or for the bayonet. With a terrifying yell he clubbed his rifle, swung it, and—the gun was silent.

He leant dizzily against the parapet, sick with excitement. A face loomed up at the side of him. It was his blasphemous friend, the Sergeant.

"Sergeant," he panted, "gimme a 'and to shift these 'ere sandbags and we can swing this bloomin' gun round."

The Sergeant's eyes glittered.

He gave a sepulchral grunt and leapt over the parapet. He tugged, and Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop pushed at the bags. For ten minutes they struggled and panted feverishly until a sufficient space was cleared. The Sergeant hurled himself through the opening just as a shower of bullets suddenly sprayed about them.

"Quick," gasped the Lance-Corporal; "they've twigged us in the support trenches."

His heart seemed to be at exploding point. Half dead with fatigue they flung themselves desperately on the gun, and slowly it swung round. They crouched behind the steel shields as the patter of the bullets made hideous nightmare rain, and the little Lance-Corporal lay back gasping like a neatly caught trout.

The Germans in the support trench in front of them were streaming across the intervening ground to the aid of their wavering comrades.

"Can yer work this old sewing-machine?" panted Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop, his eyes bulging with anxiety.

The Sergeant nodded, and his mouth tightened with savage ferocity.

"There'll be some fresh faces in 'eaven to-morrer when I've finished," he retorted with grim blasphemy.

"Give it 'em 'ot!" howled Blenkinsop, and at that moment the gun spoke vindictively. He screamed with hysterical wildness as the Germans plunged on to certain death and flopped about picturesquely on the shambles beneath their feet.

The Sergeant was working in a terrible and grim silence, the little deserter feeding him with ammunition until his backbone seemed to have snapped.

"Lumme, I'm finished," he jerked out in a sort of asthmatical whisper, and he huddled on the ground like a collapsed balloon, his tongue a red blotch against the grime of his face.

"Get up!" shouted the Sergeant. "You can't 'ave a nap now, yer lazy blighter."

Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop grinned feebly, his head fell back, and then he lost all interest in the exciting proceedings round about him.

* * * * *

Next day Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop paraded with the regiment and listened dazedly to the proud C.O., who was telling his men how the splendid fight they had put up, and the two lines of German trenches they had carried, were amongst the finest and most imperishable things the regiment had done since the days of Marlborough.

Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop was not quite sure who Marlborough was, but he knew he didn't live down Peckham way—unless, of course, it was the bloke who kept the "Marlborough Arms."

And then the Colonel went on to speak huskily of the valour of Sergeant Bunting and Private Jones, who were to be recommended for the D.C.M., for the almost incredibly plucky way they had practically turned the fortunes of the fight by working a captured machine gun.

His head was still throbbing painfully with the mad tumult of yesterday. Dizzily he heard a sharp voice ordering Sergeant Bunting and Private Jones to step to the front. He stood still, wondering incuriously who these heroes could be.

He saw the Sergeant step forward smartly, and then there was an awkward pause. Again came the imperious command for Private Jones. Then he saw the Sergeant salute, say something to the Colonel, turn and stride down the lines glaring aggressively at the men.

His eyebrows positively bristled as he reached the Lance-Corporal.

"Come on, you dreamy-eyed vision," snapped the Sergeant in a savage whisper. "What the deuce are you standing there for?"

"Wot's up?" stammered the bewildered little man.

"Yer name's Jones, ain't it?" retorted the Sergeant irritably.

Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop blushed like a

Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop leapt up and dashed wildly at the surviving gunner. . . . With a terrifying yell he clubbed his rifle, swung it, and—the gun was silent.

fully matured peony as memory came back to him of the name he had given the Sergeant the night before.

"Yes," he grinned. "That's me maiden name on me mother's side."

Then he stepped forward smartly and walked across with the Sergeant.

"Look 'ere, Sergeant," he muttered in a ferocious whisper, putting his mouth in a ventriloquial position as they strode over to the little group of staff-officers, "if the Colonel arsks questions abart me, don't split. Will yer?"

"Wot abart?" asked the Sergeant, also ventriloquially.

"I'm not a fightin' man, I ain't. I'm in the 'poultice-wallahs,' only I couldn't stick it no longer, so I bunked."

"Oh dear!" muttered the Sergeant with pregnant emphasis "You're a 'oly marvel, you are. Yer can trust me, cocky. I won't split."

Lance-Corporal Blenkinsop's face twitched in unspoken thanks, and he advanced with new confidence.

The next moment he was standing stiffly at the salute before the group of staff-officers and dazedly found himself shaking hands with the Colonel.

"The regiment is very proud of you," was all the Colonel said.

But as Lance-Corporal Horace Blenkinsop remarked subsequently, glowing with pride at the recollection, it wasn't so much what the Colonel had to say—it was the blooming way he said it!

Driver Jim

HE was only a driver at Pickford's, and she—just a Cockney gal,
No type of English beauty, with the commonplace name of Sal.
They met in the Boro' one evening—I happened to be with Jim—
He chucked a wink at her slyly—she threw the "glad eye" at him.

Then the war broke out in August, and when Jimmy heard and saw
What the Huns were doing in Belgium, he bit his lips and swore.
And he came to me and said: "Billy, I tell you, I'm goin' to enlist,
I'll do my bit for my country," and he cursed and clenched his fist.

He joined the R.E.'s as a driver, and I took the message from Jim
Saying he'd gone down to Chatham, and would she remember him?
She seemed struck of a heap and shivered, then smiled, said she didn't care,
But I knew that if anything happened, her heart would be filled with despair.

He came up for leave at Christmas, and we went to the gaff one night,
And one turn—I'll give yer my word, she was more than a bit all right—
Sang a song of our boys in khaki, and the bit what they call the refrain,
Was all about how we should greet 'em, "When the boys come home again!"

And Sal sat there proud and happy, though her eyes with tears were dim,
As she hugged him tightly and murmured: "You're sure to come back to me, Jim."
And Jim, he just grinned as he squeezed her, and said: "You can bet your sweet life
I'll come back when the war is over, and bless you, I'll make yer my wife."

* * * * * * * * *

"Somewhere in France" lies a hero, his heart torn by shot and shell;
He's done his bit for his country—rode straight in the jaws of hell,
Bore back his colonel to safety, and gave up his life for him;
And they sent home the Cross to his mother, inscribed with the name of "Jim."

There's another heart broken in London, but neither by shot nor shell;
A heart that finds comfort, though broken, 'cos Jim fought so bravely and well.
The mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting—with exactness grinds He all.

Sapper C. J. Tarr, *Royal Engineers.*

SAWS for SUBALTERNS

BY "ARCHIBALD THE TRENCH-MORTAR."

This article is contributed by a captain, and embodies his own experience at the Front. Since returning he has been responsible for the training of many young officers, and, in consequence, he knows exactly the difficulties which beset them, and the best way out of these.—Ed. R. M.

A SUBALTERN in command of a platoon at the Front has the best command of anyone in the British Army. This fact he does not always fully realise. There are forty men (if his lot has been lucky) in his platoon, which is divided into four sections. He should be a father to those men; they should look on him as a tribesman looks on his chief—that is, a MAN to follow and protect. That ideal can only be attained in one way—by gaining the confidence of the men.

An officer once came up to two generals, who were talking "somewhere in France." He asked them:

"What is the first thing to teach a soldier?"

The senior general answered "To obey"; the other said "No, sir, I would not give that answer. I would rather say: 'Teach him to have complete confidence in his platoon commander.' When he has learnt that, obedience of the right sort will surely follow."

Speaking for myself, I believe that the latter is the right answer. Now how do you (I am talking to platoon commanders) gain this confidence? The regular officers had time to do it at their leisure before the war, but the present-day subaltern has a very short time in which to imitate them. Yet to learn how to do it is by far the most essential item in an officer's education.

Both drill and discipline help you, but most of the responsibility rests with you and your personality. You must always remember this: on active service there are two words that should be imprinted on your brain—"MY MEN." You must think of your men before all else—yourself, senior officers, or the enemy.

Perhaps this seems an obvious and easy task, but I can assure you that when people come into billets back from the trenches, wet, hungry, muddy, and tired—well, it's not every officer who sees to his men before he sees to himself. When you come in, go to your men; see them settled in and as comfortable as circumstances allow. See that they get a feed, if possible, or a tot of rum; see it issued yourself. If you make a habit of doing this, you are beginning to win the men's confidence.

I once heard the following conversation take place in the trenches. There were two men discussing the points and qualities of their respective platoon officers:

"No," said the first, "yours is an officer who knows his job, but he don't know his men. Now my orficer do! He choked off old 'Skinny Liz' t'other day somethin' terrible — you should have heard old 'Skinny's' knees knock!"

"Garn with yer!" said the second. "Yer orficer ain't as good as mine—he don't come round and ask yer if yer comfortable-like when yer comes back to billets."

"No, mate, he don't, and that's just what we were saying in the section a few minutes back. I says to our sergeant, old Busty Ward:

"'Why don't he come round and have a dekko (look) at us when he goes into billets, instead of seein' after his own grub?'

"Busty smacks back and says:

"Then old Busty Ward says: "'Well, if he were responsible for your life, Private Dickson, he wouldn't have much on 'is shoulders.'"

"'Hold yer mug, Dickson! Who are you to be criticisin' of yer orficers? Wait till he goes "over the top"' (An attack is known as "going over the top.")

"Then Dirty Dick—him who's grown a beard—says:

"'Ay! and see the poor little fellow drop—no fear! He ought to be home with his mamma, not here, responsible for our lives.'

"Then old Busty Ward says:

"'Well, if he were responsible for your life, Private Dickson, he wouldn't have much on 'is shoulders.'"

The other man then slowly shifted his seat and answered:

"Well, my orficer is the right man in the right place—that's what I says—and I'd follow 'im to 'ell. We've seen 'im come in from the trenches a darned sight worse than us, but he always comes and says:

"'All comfortable, men?'

"We says 'Yes, sir'—although sometimes it's awful.

"'Have you had any grub?'

"Well, if we ain't, he goes off and sees we bloomin' well do get some. That's a *man* and an orficer, I says, or my name ain't what it is."

I have given the men's words just as they were spoken.

They show you that this consideration is worth a great deal. The conversation is perfectly true, and I think every Tommy who *knows* and reads this will back me up.

Work your men; don't pander to them or worry them; curse them when they need it, and show them that you are not afraid of them. Never hesitate in front of them; be decisive in your actions; say what you are going to say in a voice audible to a battalion.

Never, if you can help it, send a man where you wouldn't care to go yourself. If you are forced to do this at any time, explain the situation. He'll understand all right, and will appreciate your action.

Treat the men as you would like an officer to treat you. Discriminate between shirkers and soldiers in the true sense of the word. Pick out the chief characters of your platoon. In every platoon there are one or two humorists, and generally one or two "leading lights"; find them, and make a study of them. Above all things encourage cheerfulness, and be cheerful yourself. Once the platoon officer gets morbid and mouldy, his men get affected—and that platoon will not be worth much in the next attack.

You will find the hump a very common malady (and an infectious one) out at the Front, and it is, sometimes, very hard to fight against, more especially when your men happen to know that you are going "over the top" to attack. Moreover, men, who have been through one fight, like to impress the new hands with morbid tales of different sorts. Platoon officers must guard against this by being cheerful themselves.

Don't think that men are always downhearted on such occasions—far from it—but they may become so if their platoon officer doesn't produce a little humour occasionally, and encourage them to do the same.

When in a tight corner, the men always look to their officer; then is the time for you to prove yourself. You must DO something—go and talk to the men, keep their spirits up; if you think you should move them, move quickly. Show them that you have a grasp of the situation, and are capable of dealing with it. DON'T HESITATE—right or wrong, do something, otherwise the men will take the matter into their own hands for better or worse. Then all is probably lost, and you had better go and get shot, for you have lost the confidence of your men, if you ever had it. Remember, *esprit de corps* and the men's love for their officers have saved many a regiment and won many a victory.

Never be downhearted, however badly things may go for you. Stick to it; be bold but cautious. "It's a poor heart that never rejoices." Above all, have plenty of confidence in yourself. If you remember this I hope it may help to account for a larger casualty list in Berlin.

Never by any chance take for granted that all your men are blackguards; some may perhaps look it outwardly, but they probably assume this *rôle* for some reason of their own—they are hiding some quality which you must draw out. I have never found a man yet who is not fit for *some* job, although he may be a shirker at others. If so, he must be punished accordingly.

Don't try to assert your authority immediately you arrive by treating the men worse than dogs. They take your authority for granted, as you are an officer, but it remains for you to prove to them that you are capable of leading them. The first few days you are in command of them, go round quietly and study them, and get to know your platoon sergeant. Ask him questions about the men. Always take his answers for what they are worth. You needn't overestimate *his* opinion of the men, but it may give you a few useful hints.

I often get asked the question: "What kit should I take out?"

That is a debatable question, but this much is certain: you will have to guard yourself against water, mud, and cold. I recommend a Thresher and Glenny trench coat, with a detachable fleece lining; it is heavy, but it is worth hundreds of others advertised (I have not got shares in Thresher and Glenny's). Also take good wool-lined gloves with gauntlets to them. The gauntlets keep the mud from getting up your sleeves when you go down a trench. The best boots are those made to the pattern of the Government trench boots. These lace up to the knees; above the laces are two straps which come just below the knees, to make certain that no water creeps in from the top, and there is a tongue sewn right down the whole length.

Add a pair of motor-cyclist's waterproof overalls reaching the thighs, with a strap round the waist; any kind of waterproof coat, tucking the ends in under your overalls' strap; a leather "flying Johnnie's" helmet, lined with fur—and then you are complete as far as outer kit goes.

As regards underclothing, take what you like, but remember the cold is horrible at night.

An officer is allowed 35 lb. with the 1st Line of Transport, which is only used when the battalion is on trek. In trenches you are allowed practically what you like.

Remember this, however—don't appear before "Fritz" dressed as I have suggested, or you will drop. Disguise yourself as one of your men, and take an even chance.

As regards a revolver, an ordinary Service Revolver is the best. The "pull off" is heavy, I know, but you will pull it all right when the time comes. An automatic is apt to jam with dirt and mud.

In a tight corner, the men always look to their officer . . . . show them that you have a grasp of the situation, and are capable of dealing with it.

714878

For "Soldiers and Sailors Too"

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a sailor or soldier. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The O.C., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

NOTHING DOING.

In a certain battalion which is now at the Front it was usual for the C.O., the Second-in-Command, or the Adjutant periodically to visit the canteen to see what the men were drinking, and if they had any complaints about the drinks.

The Major appeared one day, and going up to a Tommy who was drinking beer said: "What are you having?"

"Oh, thanks very much, sir, I'll have a bitter," said the soldier.

The Major, not being gifted with a great sense of humour, replied:

"Well, I hope it's all right when you get it."

GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

OLD LADY (to patient severely wounded): "Poor man, have you lost your leg?"

WOUNDED TOMMY: "Yes, mum."

OLD LADY: "Oh, poor fellow, do have a plum," she begged, handing him one.

WOUNDED TOMMY (aside to his chum when the old lady had departed): "Bill, I think I'll have my other leg off before she comes next week. I might get a banana."

THE PROPER STEPS.

While coming over in the troopship we were having lectures in the saloon by our Captain. On the wall there was a large landscape map, and we were being questioned as to what precautions we would take under different circumstances. The Captain picked out one likely recruit and said:

"Now, Courtney, supposing you were on this ridge" (pointing to the map) "in charge of a squad of men. What steps would you take if the enemy were advancing in large numbers?"

"Deuced long steps," was the quick reply.

DEFAULTERS WE.

[Needless to say this term refers to prize competition.]

For an extra drink,
Defaulters we;
We cuts the lawn in front of the mess,
We're shoved in clink,
Ten days' C.B.,
And rolls the lawn in front of the mess.

We picks up weeds
And 'umps the coal,
And trims the lawn in front of the mess;
We're plantin' seeds,
And the roads we roll,
Likewise the lawn in front of the mess.

The officers they
Are sloshin' balls
On the lawn we've mowed in front of the mess;
And every day
Our names they calls,
To make the lawn in front of the mess.

And once-a-while
They 'as a "do,"
On the lawn in front of the mess;
Ain't 'arf some style,
Band playing too,
On our bloomin' lawn in front of the mess.

They dance about
And dig in their 'eels
On the green in front of the mess;
There ain't no doubt
As 'ow we feels
For the blinkin' lawn in front of the mess.

The great O.C.,
Who see 'e can see
We loves the lawn in front of the mess,
He knows this too,
That without C.B.
There'd be no lawn in front of the mess.

AFTER HOURS.

By C. Randolph Lichfield.

"True courage scorns
To vent her prowess in a storm of words:
And, to the valiant, actions speak alone."

Now Norah *knew* something was wrong.

Haynes had risen from his desk with an odious, insinuating laugh at her firm rejoinder, and was crossing the office towards her with a slow, meandering step, which made her tingle with combativeness.

For some time it had been dawning on her that, despite what Mr. Dawley had said, Haynes had made up his mind to outstay her at the office. She could not imagine what reason he had, but she had resolved that he should not succeed, simply because it seemed strange that he should wish to. But if now, as a last resource, he was going to make love to her, as his laugh and step suggested, in order to drive her from the office, what could she do? Something was wrong she felt sure; he must have some reason for wishing to outstay her, but it could scarcely be sufficiently serious for her to submit to being made love to by a man she disliked and instinctively mistrusted.

As he reached her side, out of the tail of her eye she saw that his thumbs were hooked into the armholes of his waistcoat, and it increased her alarm and combativeness that he approached her with an easy familiarity and confidence which were not justified by the terms on which they had worked together in John Dawley's office.

He took his thumbs from his armholes, and setting his stubby hands on her table, brought his face on to a level with hers.

"I do hate to see you working overtime, Miss Blaine," he said ingratiatingly. "Why do you?"

She glanced up into his full, dark eyes, her own narrowing with resentment.

"You heard what Mr. Dawley said," she returned coldly; "he asked me to stay overtime in case he needed to telephone any alterations for the letter to——"

"But he said half-an-hour, and it is more than that."

She made a little motion with her hands, and glanced away.

"Don't trouble about me," she said. "If I am staying later than he asked me to, so are you, and he made no such request to you. He said quite loud enough for you to hear that I was to lock up the office. The others have gone; why do you remain?"

An almost unctuous smile relieved the wooden expressionlessness of his fat, smooth face.

"D'you think I could be so unmannerly as to quit, leaving you to continue the dreary drudgery?" he inquired.

"I am simply waiting," Norah rejoined carelessly, leaning back in her chair. "I was typing merely to kill time. I fancy you must know even better than I do that Mr. Dawley has a matter of the greatest importance on his hands just now—the usual routine of the office is a little disturbed. And since he could anticipate having to telephone fresh instructions to me half-an-hour after time, circumstances might make him a good deal later than that. I shall wait till I feel that he does not wish the letter altered; then I shall post it and go home."

"I wonder if you know," said Haynes drawlingly, as he sat on a corner of her table, "how often you speak as if you didn't like me?"

"You must draw your own inferences from that," she retorted, and selecting a sevenpenny novel from the litter of letters, opened it and began to read.

He uttered a catchy laugh, and stood away from the table. For the moment it seemed that he would leave her, but as she glanced through her lashes at him, he turned and laid a hand on the back of her chair.

"You deserve to be kissed for that," he said, "and I've half a mind to do it. Why do you waste so much devotion on Mr. Dawley, who doesn't care a rap for you, and think so little of me?"

She was on her feet in an instant, bridling with passionate resentment, though her indignation was scarcely greater than her surprise. How had she ever by word or look betrayed her secret? How had this seemingly smug, self-centred creature divined what she felt sure John Dawley himself had never guessed?

"How dare you?" she cried breathlessly, her fair face gleamingly white.

"You would not like me to kiss you?" he inquired, chuckling. "Yet you have remained alone with me all this while—almost alone in the whole building, I imagine—when you need not have done. I offered to wait and alter the letter for you, if necessary. It ought not to surprise you that I thought you might be inclined for a gentle flirtation. I'm not detaining you now—unless you are."

His words left no doubt in her mind that he was manœuvring to get her out of the office, but still she could not think why.

She leant against the wall behind her, and looked from him to her hat and jacket hanging on the clothes-peg, wondering excitedly.

"You don't seem in any great hurry to quit me now," he drawled laughingly.

A scornful rejoinder curled her lips, but was held back by a startling question springing to her mind. Was he possibly a spy?

To look at him again was to doubt it; he appeared to her so lumpish, stupid—so incapable of guile or cunning; so utterly different from her preconception of spies. And yet—she knew he was not stupid; his work in the office had proved it, giving Mr. Dawley every satisfaction. Possibly he was a spy! Possibly the finished plans of Mr. Charles's torpedo were locked away in the safe in the next room, and he knew or suspected it. It was not an office matter at all, of course, but everybody there knew well that Mr. Dawley had interested himself in his elder brother's invention, even to the neglect of his own business, and had staked everything on getting it perfected and adopted by the Admiralty.

There had been rumours of its extraordinary power before Haynes entered Mr. Dawley's service. What more probable than that the enemy, failing perhaps to plant a spy in Mr. Charles's workshop, had insinuated one here, where Mr. Charles was a frequent visitor to discuss it with Mr. Dawley—and that the spy was Haynes? Supposing the finished plans were in the safe, and he thought he could steal them—supposing he *could*?

"You're—behaving like—like a perfect cad!" panted Norah, hoping to hide her suspicions from him while she considered what she had better do. "When—when you're sober, you'll be sorry for this."

Haynes showed at once that his foolish-looking face was a mere mask to an agile mind by accepting the idea that he was intoxicated. He thrust his hands into his trouser pockets, drew his chin in a little, and laughed maudlinly.

"You think that's it, do you?" he inquired drowsily. "But it isn't—it isn't; it's love—pure love."

"I—I think—I may safely go now," Norah muttered, washing her hands in the air nervously. "I—I've waited nearly an hour."

She half-turned to her table as if to put the things away, but restrained herself, and, moving out of his reach, she crossed to where her hat and jacket hung.

Haynes followed her with his eyes, and, taking his hands from his pockets, leant rather unsteadily on her chair.

"And I'm not to have a kiss?" he said, chuckling. "Too bad!"

Norah was too much occupied with her thoughts to respond, and she put on her jacket in silence. But as she took her hat she turned to him.

"I don't think you're in a state to be trusted to lock up," she said. "I must ask you to go, and let me do so."

His eyes lit with anger for a moment, then cooled with a brooding look.

"I'm all right," he declared, drawing himself erect. "I'm all right. Leave the key with me, and I'll see to it."

"I am responsible," returned Norah firmly, fastening her veil. "I must see that the office is properly locked up before I give the key to the housekeeper."

"Now you're being nasty," he expostulated, and, crossing to his desk, slowly began to gather his books and papers together. "Why should you be nasty about it? As if I couldn't be trusted to lock up. Not lock up! I like that! Not shut a door and turn a key in a lock!"

Guessing that he was only talking while he took thought as to what he should do to get rid of her without exciting her suspicion, Norah tried to resolve what she should do if he refused to go. It was most probable that, except for the housekeeper and the porter in

the basement, five floors below, she and Haynes were alone in the building.

While Haynes kept up a flow of vapid, inane talk, Norah moved quietly to John Dawley's room to make sure the outer door was duly locked.

She switched on the light and went to the roll-top desk. It was closed and locked—every drawer of it. Crossing to the farther door, she found that also locked. And the safe was locked. She made doubly sure of that fact; most certainly the safe was locked.

For a moment she paused, glancing about her, wondering what Haynes could contemplate doing if not to steal the plans of the torpedo; and, if they were in the office, they were certainly locked up in the safe.

When she crossed the room to leave, the half-open door hid Haynes from her, although he was across the threshold, waiting for her; and as she recoiled in sharp surprise to find him there, he sprang at her.

He caught her round the neck with his left arm and thrust a compressed handkerchief over her mouth with his hand. His weight and the suddenness of the attack bore her staggering back into the middle of the room.

"You'd make trouble, would you?" he cried breathlessly. "Then you shall have the lion's share of it!"

In the first moment of her bewildering surprise she threshed the air wildly with her supple young arms, but, recovering directly, she braced herself, summoning all her strength and courage to fight him, to escape him and raise an alarm.

She was strong and active, and he was at some disadvantage in having to keep her mouth covered, and she fought him without pity. She beat him in the face with her clenched hands, clutched and tore at his wrist and arms, and strained from his embrace with one hand pressed against his chest, the other on his chin, forcing his head back.

She fought him as she would have fought a savage animal, not so much on her own account as for John Dawley's sake, for she could not think Haynes would have dared attack her in this manner if he had not been morally certain of thereby gaining his object and finishing his task at the office. She fought to defeat him. It could only be the plans he wanted. There was nothing else. He was no common thief who could be hunted down on the morrow, but a spy who to-morrow would be gone.

But despite her struggling, and braving her blows, Haynes forced her back towards an easy-chair. At the critical moment, however, she saw the chair, and kicked it away behind her.

He cursed her between his teeth and tried to throw her at his feet, but, with one arm round his neck and the fingers of the other hand curled into his collar at the throat, she clung to him, her wild eyes saying more than words could express. Then, again, he began to force her towards the chair.

Conscious that she was weakening, and baffled by the sense of partial suffocation, she made a supreme effort to break away from him—and for a time succeeded.

She threw him back from her and wheeled towards the door. But in an instant he was behind her. He caught her round the waist, and as she uttered a breathless, futile scream, he flung her down behind Mr. Dawley's desk, dropping on one knee beside her. Her head struck the desk with a force that dazed her, and while she lay inertly, gasping, he gagged her with a folded handkerchief and, whipping off his tie, secured her wrists.

Panting and flushed, he got to his feet. Looking round for something to bind her ankles, he darted to the window and snatched the blind-cord for the purpose.

"Now, you see," he sneered, and made her wrists doubly secure with a spare length of cord, "you'll have to stay here till the morning."

It was as he turned away from her that the outer door of the other room was opened and somebody entered the office.

Swinging round in sudden alarm, Haynes stood for a moment spellbound, looking at Norah, looking at the communicating door.

"Anybody here?" sang out a man's voice.

Haynes ran his trembling hands over his hair, and, stepping aside to kick Norah's hat out of sight from the other room, hastened forward.

"Yes," he answered huskily. "Whom did you want to see?"

Though she was bound helplessly and hidden from the other room by the desk, Norah's heart was leaping with hope, and her brain was straining to evolve an idea of what she could do to attract the caller.

She recognised his voice, she fancied, as that of a man who had been in to see John Dawley the day before. If she could make a noise that would alarm him! She drew up her feet, and, bracing her heels against the floor, pushed back with all her

might against the desk in an effort to overturn it. But she could not move it.

Surely, she thought, the man must notice Haynes' confusion, the absence of his tie, his crumpled collar and rumpled hair! Would he not guess something was wrong?

"I said I'd call in on my way; I didn't expect to be detained at the office so late," he was saying carelessly in reply to something Haynes had said. "There was the chance he might be detained here, so I ran in, though the porter was none too willing to pass me up."

With her feet firmly planted on the floor, Norah worked with her head and shoulders and helpless hands to stand erect; but when, with so much difficulty, she had succeeded, she was momentarily afraid to do what she had in her mind, and in the moment of her hesitation the man bade Haynes a curt good-night and went, banging the door—banging it even as she threw herself upon the floor in a hopeless attempt to attract his attention.

Haynes found her in a faint. He untied her wrists and removed the gag, and, rolling her upon her back, he sprinkled her face with water and began chafing her hands. But at the first signs she showed of reviving, he carefully readjusted the gag and tied her wrists again. But this time, to allow her to lie flat upon her back, he tied her wrists in front of her.

Norah's first consciousness was of the dull pain in her right shoulder. She tried to raise a hand to touch it, and, finding herself bound, immediately recalled the circumstances of her position. Looking through the veil of her tumbled hair towards the safe, she saw Haynes. She could not tell what he was doing, but, by the slight sound he was making, she imagined he was drilling a hole in the safe door.

She raised her hands slightly, and, looking down at them, strained vainly at the bonds. She was powerless. There was, of course, a possibility that Haynes would fail to open the safe, but he had had opportunities to examine it, and, if he possessed any technical knowledge of such things, it might present no great difficulties to him.

Turning her head a little on the tangle of her hair, Norah saw the cord of the telephone looped down the back of the roll-top desk within a couple of feet of her face. The instrument itself stood on the top of the desk.

Norah's gaze travelled up and down the cord while she wondered how she could make use of the telephone. She tried to stimulate her imagination by reflecting how much was at stake; not only might John Dawley be ruined by the loss of the plans, but a powerful weapon would be placed in the hands of the enemy.

But what could she do? She was willing to run any risk, but there seemed nothing she could do with the least chance of success. She might be able to pull the telephone down with scarcely any noise, and she could pull the gag from her mouth, of course, but Haynes would hear her very first word and give her no time for a second . . . If only it had been a telegraph instrument instead! If only—— But in a sense it *was*!—it was!

A wave of excitement surged over her and she emerged from it stifling, her brain swimming.

Turning her eyes up, she watched Haynes for a few seconds at work upon the door, paying no heed to her. Yet he might glance round and detect her first movement. . . . She watched him anxiously, waiting till the rhythmic movement of his right arm and a slight grinding noise suggested he was drilling a fresh hole; then she sat up as quietly and quickly as she could, and, grabbing the telephone cord as high up as possible, swung the instrument into the air and lowered it to her lap before it could swing back against the desk.

It clattered—to her it seemed to thunder—and she glanced round at Haynes despairingly. But he had not heard, and taking hold of the instrument so that the rest was depressed with one finger, she set it down between her and the desk, and lay back wearily.

If only the girl at the Exchange knew the Morse code—if only she was intelligent enough to understand!

Norah hitched a corner of her jacket on to the rest to keep it depressed while she fixed the receiver between her ear and the desk. Then she was ready.

Looking back over her head she saw Haynes pause in his work, take out a handkerchief and mop his face. While he did so, he glanced round at her. But it was so slight, so cursory a glance, he did not notice the telephone, and with no more than a tired sigh, he turned back to his task.

Norah waited till his right arm got into a rhythmic swing again, then lifted the corner of her jacket from the rest, and waited. And her heart seemed to stand still and her flesh crept. In her mind's eye she saw a pert, alert girl seated at the telephone switch-board at

("AFTER HOURS" continued overleaf.)

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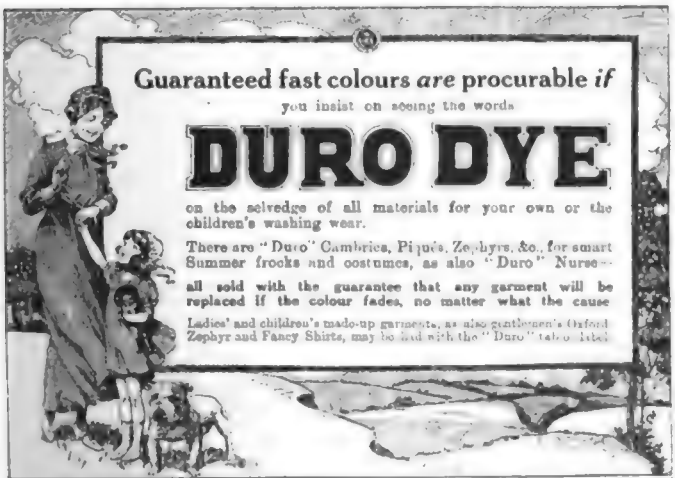

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the Exchange, glance swiftly at the tiny lamp which had lighted up as she released the rest of the telephone, and thrust into the hole below, the plug attached to the spring ear-cap she was wearing.

"Number, please."

The voice was so actual, so startlingly present compared with the vague, nebulous scene Norah was picturing that she lost her presence of mind for a moment and did not know what she intended. But the question being repeated with sharper intonation recalled her to her senses, and she agitated the rest with a finger for a moment.

"Number, please!" demanded the voice impatiently, for all the world as if Haynes must hear.

Then, putting all her mind and heart into her finger on the rest, Norah tapped out in Morse code:

. . . . . — . . . — — .

"What number do you want?"

The voice sounded even more startlingly present than before, and in an ecstasy of alarm Norah threw an upward glance at Haynes. But he had evidently not heard; paying no attention to her he went on with his work.

Again she tapped out in Morse code:

H-e-l-p.

"Hello!" came the voice in her ear, its tone rising with impatience. "Why don't you answer?"

H-e-l-p tapped Norah for the third time. *Couldn't* the girl understand or *wouldn't* she? H-e-l-p.

"I wish you'd tell me the number you want instead of doing that. Number, please."

H-e-l-p, repeated Norah, slowly, for emphasis.

"Is something wrong with your instrument, or why don't you answer?"

Y-e-s, tapped Norah eagerly. H-e-l-p.

"Well, I don't know what to do with you. Good-bye."

H-e-l-p, Norah tapped, becoming frantic. But she was "off."

In a frenzy she agitated the rest. . . . No answer.

A short, sardonic laugh from Haynes caused her to look round at him wildly, wondering if he had already opened the safe. So far as she could see he had not yet succeeded, but his laugh suggested that he was satisfied with his progress and the end of his task was in sight. And his movements, quick, eager movements suggested it, too. He had laid aside the brace for another tool, like a piece of stout wire. Norah felt certain he knew he could open the safe, certain he knew the plans were there. And the girl at the Exchange could not or would not try to understand!

Once again, despairingly, Norah agitated the telephone.

"Number, please!" asked the voice peremptorily.

H-e-l-p, tapped Norah.

"Number, please!"

H-e-l p, Norah tapped again.

"Can't you hear me?"

H-e-l-p, persisted Norah, hoping the girl would at length recognise the repetition and guess that she was signalling.

"If you can hear me, why don't you answer? Number, please!"

Desperate now, Norah abandoned every hope and caution for one remote chance. She sat up quickly, and, raising her hand, forced the muffling handkerchief from her mouth, then snatched the telephone to her.

"Help!" she cried, trying not to scream. "Send help—police! You know the number—seven—two——"

At her first word Haynes had swung round in surprise. Just for a moment he paused. Then, suddenly comprehending, he dashed across to her, and, snatching the telephone from her with one hand, forced her upon her back with the other.

He cursed her with a stream of sibilant oaths, while he caught the dangling receiver, placed it on the rest, and set the telephone out of reach. He was white to the lips and violently agitated.

Norah cowered under his curses and expected him to strike her. But, so far from doing that, he wheeled away, and, darting back to the safe, set to work again with feverish haste, evidently hoping to complete his task and get away before anybody should come, if anybody were coming.

Almost overcome by excitement, Norah lay inertly, with closed eyes, dully wondering if the girl had understood and was taking any measures to help her. It almost seemed Haynes had snatched the instrument from her before she could speak. Still there was a chance—a bare chance. Perhaps it was to be a race between Haynes and those who were coming—a race for the plans.

The idea revived Norah, and, turning her head to get the best view she could of Haynes, she saw signs that he thought somebody might be coming. He was clearly quivering with excitement, so agitated and in such haste that he fumbled badly

with a tool which seemed to require very delicate manipulation. She could hear him breathing heavily through his nose as if his teeth were set and lips compressed.

So baffling became his agitation that after a few minutes a hard-bitten exclamation broke from him, and he flung away from the safe as if in utter hopelessness. But the next moment he braced himself, and, after throwing a glance at Norah, resumed his task.

Hushing her movements, Norah made repeated but futile attempts to undo the cord around her wrists with her teeth. Then, sitting up and drawing in her feet, she tried to free her ankles. It was in her mind that if she could regain freedom of movement in the office, even though she could not escape or raise an alarm, she might delay Haynes for a few minutes, which might mean all the difference between his winning or losing the race. He would have to leave the safe to catch her and tie her again, and she would elude and fight him to the last possible instant.

But owing to the manner in which her wrists were tied she could not free her ankles, though she tried in every way.

There was yet one thing, however, she could do to hinder him, and even though he might run the risk of somebody hearing her, rather than lose precious moments in re-adjusting the gag, the danger would tax his already strained nerves to the utmost, and perhaps renew his baffling agitation.

Norah lay back and drew a few deep breaths, then shrieked—shriek upon shriek, high-pitched, piercing shrieks that must have turned Haynes' blood cold as he swung round and dashed to her side; and as he clapped a hand over her mouth she bit the flesh of one of his fingers viciously and held it doggedly when he tried to snatch it away. She had forgotten all that is gentle and pitying in a woman's nature, forgotten sex, indeed; the man and the country she loved were being robbed, and it was all too little she could do to prevent it.

She raised her hands and tried to catch him by the throat, but he obviated that by pinning one arm down with his knee, and, growling with pain and anger, he seized her by the throat stranglingly to force her to release his other hand.

He still held her throat while he looked at his bleeding finger and shook his hand, and it was with vengeful savageness he tied the gag over her mouth while she gasped horribly for breath.

But she had only one thought when he started to his feet and darted to the safe—that she could bring him back again and yet again until he tied her hands behind her, and to do that he must first untie them!

Tearing the gag from her mouth, she took a few deep, refreshing draughts of breath, then screamed again, shrill and staccato, shriek after shriek, and she was ready for Haynes when, almost beside himself with wrathful agitation, he rushed across to her. She shot up her hands and caught him by the wrist as he made to cover her mouth with his palm, and though he tore at her arms and kicked her, she hung on to him; though he pulled madly at her hands and beat them, she clung to him.

"My—are you mad? Shall I kill you?" he shouted hoarsely, hammering her wrists and forearms with his clenched fist. "Let go or I'll kill you."

The look in his eyes was more terrible than his words. It weakened her resolution and relaxed her grasp. He tore himself free, and she dropped heavily upon her elbows, half fainting.

Gulping in breathless passion, Haynes stood away, watching her for a moment or two, then, perhaps supposing she had fainted, turned back to the safe to set to work again with redoubled haste.

Norah lay still for a while, her face on her outstretched arms, faint from pain, exhaustion and fear of him, for she had felt his ruthless kicks and blows, seen the look of explosive madness in his staring eyes. Nevertheless, as her pain dulled and her strength revived, she dared attempt to bait him further.

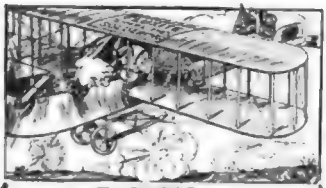
Raising herself upon her forearms she screamed. But now her voice had lost its piercing, agonised quality, and though Haynes started round and looked at her apprehensively, he did not leave the safe.

"If I come to you again I'll kill you!" he cried, and turned away again.

A moment later he pulled the safe door open!

Norah saw it open, and all that was strong, fierce, and defiant in her nature rose as he thrust his arms eagerly into the safe to search for what he wanted. She pulled herself up by her hands, and gave utterance to a shriek that shook him like an unexpected blow. Gasping, he wheeled round, and snatching up the brace that lay at his feet, he rushed across and struck her wildly—once!—only once, for even as she broke off her scream and shrank to avoid the blow, both heard the outer door of the other room suddenly attacked.

["AFTER HOURS" continued overleaf.]



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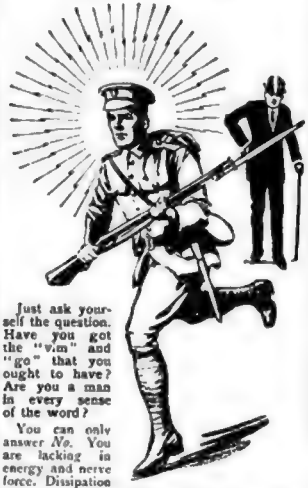

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ROYAL MAG. May, 1916.....

The blow stunned her, and she fell against the desk. Haynes sprang away, dropping the brace beside her. He threw a startled glance towards the other room, and a despairing look towards the safe, then darting to the door into the passage, he quickly and quietly turned the key, in readiness—and as two men rushed into the office, Haynes flung out. A third man was waiting on the landing for him, but missed him—missed him by a hand, and stumbled!

Panting, Haynes wheeled and started down the stairs. He missed his footing, threw up his arms with a stifled cry, and pitched down into the darkness.

At the sight of John Dawley coming across the ward to her Norah raised herself slightly on her elbows, and because she felt excited and embarrassed by his visit and wished to hide it, she betrayed it with a weak, nervous laugh.

"I'm so glad you've come, Mr. Dawley," she exclaimed. "I can't find out anything from the nurses. Do tell me—are the plans safe?"

Dawley's lips flickered with a smile which contrasted rather oddly with the grave, contemplative expression in his eyes.

"How are you?" he inquired anxiously.

"Nicely, thank you. Do tell me—are the plans quite safe?"

"Perfectly—thanks to you. We handed them over this morning—everything settled. I'm utterly at a loss for words to thank you. May I take this chair?"

"And Haynes—was he caught?"

"He was, and he wasn't—and serve him jolly well right. But let's not speak of him; I have another subject to broach. . . . My brother wished to come and thank you, too, but I would not let him. You see, he has a happy knack of expressing himself, at which I am a duffer, and if he'd given you an inkling of my gratitude you might have thought it was that—more than anything which prompts me to—to ask you to become my wife, whereas I wanted to ask you months ago, but my financial position was so uncertain I—I—— Would you of your charity hold my hand a minute, and see if you can infuse a little of your own splendid courage into me—Norah?"

L'ENTENTE CORDIALE.

1.

Tommy Atkins:

Oh, Antoinette,
I don't know yet
The way to "parlez-vous."
I say "bon jour"
And "mon amour,"
But that's all I can do.

2.

Antoinette:

Mon brave soldat,
Je sais tout ça.
It is so difficile;
Mais promenade,
Is zat so hard?
I sink it très facile.

3.

Tommy Atkins:

Oh, Antoinette,
I'm glad I met
A girl with brains like you:
If you just walk
And do not talk,
I need not "pa lez-vous."

4.

Antoinette:

Mon cher soldat
You "juste là,"
You compris me zo best;
You squeeze my 'and,
You understand,
Ze eyes will do ze rest.

R. C. T.

MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Pregnant Prattle Prettily Phrased.

ON NOTHING.

It is one of those beautiful days golden with the promise of Spring, when one would believe in the possibility of being loved for oneself alone, irrespective of one's personal fortune and the old castle down in Hampshire. The air is what poet's call ambient, and they ought to know, since it forms the staple feature of their diet.

I sit and watch members of the staff drop like ripe fruit into the basket of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for War; I hear in anticipation the soft "*plop!*" with which I, myself, may presently part company, so to speak, from the stalk on which I have hung this many a day, and fall also into the same receptacle.

A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT.

I hope you will like this, the May number. The contents page fills me with a measure of legitimate pride. It has made history. You will travel far upon your respective roads before you look upon its like again, except in the ROYAL. With us it is simply a step onward and upward. What we have done once we can do again. Watch the ROYAL. Take your tip from the Navy and Army. They all read it, and they know.

THE PRICE OF THE "ROYAL"

will be sixpence henceforward. The advance is due entirely to the increased and increasing cost of production. Paper is dearer, the supply is smaller; the metal used by engravers has risen in price. We have delayed asking you for the extra three half-pence as long as possible, but the hour has struck. We are sorry, but there is no arguing with figures; it has to be.

ARE YOU PHOTO-PUZZING?

In these hard times you cannot afford to neglect a chance of winning a substantial sum of money. On page 109 you will find particulars of a fascinating competition in connection with which we are offering £100 in prizes. There is a first prize of £50 and a second prize of £20. Set your wits to work and see if you can't win one of them.

THE F.A.F.

I have just received from the Hon. Secretary of Pearson's Fresh Air Fund (16-18 Henrietta Street, W.C.) one of the most novel collecting devices I have ever seen. I thought such a lot of it that I decided to reproduce it in miniature and—here it is.

The figures at the bottom of the wall are detachable. When you have collected one shilling for the Fresh Air Fund you place the figure of one child—with the aid of a drawing-pin—in the place marked for it in the landscape. This reminds you that you have sent one child prisoner for a day of happiness in the country.

Each step represents one penny—so if you have collected, say, eighteen pence, the indication would show one child in the country and another halfway up the steps.

The whole thing is very artistically produced and would be a positive adornment to your mantelpiece. I understand that the Secretary will send it gratis to any reader of the ROYAL who cares to drop him a postcard.

Here is a reproduction of the charming Fresh Air Fund collecting device described on this page. Doesn't it inspire you to try and send a city child into the country for a day?

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HIGH STREET, CLAPHAM, S.W.

Size 3, "Swan" Slip-on-Cap, **16/6**

You can have a "Swan" that will suit you better than any other pen you are using.

Every person's handwriting is peculiar. Everyone feels that only one type of pen point will suit his own style of writing. After obtaining the point he likes, he becomes so attached to his pen that he cannot write without it. No other pen will serve his purpose.

Get a "Swan" and it becomes in a few days not A fountain pen but YOUR pen—a writing instrument peculiarly your own.

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GUARANTEED TO GIVE COMPLETE SATISFACTION.

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THE FINEST PORTABLE TYPEWRITER ever produced is unquestionably the **Standard Folding Machine** here shown. It weighs only 6 lbs., and measures 10½ by 9 by 3 ins. Wonderfully simple but complete in every detail. Universal Keyboard, Visible Writing, Two-colour Ribbon. Easy to learn, easy to carry. Invaluable to ARMY and NAVY Officers.
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The milk of a healthy mother confers a degree of immunity to infection to the young infant. Many mothers, however, though willing, cannot nurse their babies for various reasons. In such cases the greatest care should be taken in selecting a proper substitute. Ordinary cow's milk cannot be regarded as a safe food for infants; it is acid, contains indigestible curd, and is almost invariably contaminated with harmful germs. By using the 'Allenburys' Foods, which are free from all dangerous organisms, and effectually replace human milk, security for baby is ensured and vigorous growth and health are promoted. The 'Allenburys' Foods are largely used and recommended by the Medical and Nursing Professions; they have stood the test of time and have become a household necessity all over the world.

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MILK FOOD No. 1.
From Birth to 3 months
In tins at 1/6 and 3/- each.

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From 3 to 6 months
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From 6 months upwards.
In tins at 6d., 1/-, 2/-, 3/- and 10/-

Write for a large sized **Free Sample** *of Food stating age of child and whether Weaned or Unweaned. Also for* **free book "Infant Feeding and Management" 64** *pages of valuable information for every mother.*

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THE 'ALLENBURYS' FEEDER
Simplest and Best.

Price 1/3 complete.

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CAN YOU NAME OUR MYSTERIOUS PICTURES?

(See next page.)

£100 IN PRIZES.

Full Particulars of a Great New ROYAL Competition.

On this page appear six odd-looking pictures, and on the following page you will find twelve which appeared last month. We call them "Photo-Puzzes," because each is a photo that is a puzz-le. See? They represent familiar objects—things you may see or use every day—but the objects are photographed from an unusual point of view. Similar pictures will appear in the ROYAL for two more months. The first prize of £50 will go to the competitor who solves all, or the greatest number, of the pictures correctly.

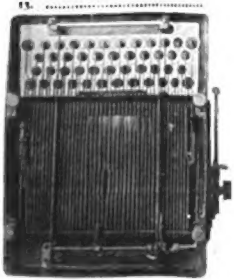
CONDITIONS OF COMPETITION.

1. The names must be clearly written in ink. (Use a fine pen.)
2. Only one name is allowed under each picture.
3. No alterations are to be made in the words. If you have made a mistake in the spelling, cross the word out and write it again.
4. When you have filled up the list cut it out and keep it by you until the date for sending in solutions is announced in the ROYAL.
5. You may forward as many sets of pages as you like. Each set will be judged independently, and the pages composing it must be fastened together in the top left-hand corner.
6. The name of the object as stated in a list in the possession of the Editor is the correct solution.
7. No competitor may receive the assistance of professional competition solvers who send out circulars or whose advertisements appear in the Press. Every person who enters for this competition must do so on this understanding, and the winners will be asked to satisfy us that they have not contravened this condition.
8. The first prize of £50 will be payable to the competitor who solves all, or the greatest number, of the pictures correctly. A second prize of £20 and five prizes of a £5 Pathéphone (with records) will be awarded to the senders of second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh most correct sets received. Ten consolation prizes of 10s. each will be distributed at the Editor's discretion among those who come next. In the event of ties, the Editor reserves the right to divide the prize-money.
9. The Editor's decision is final and competitors enter on this understanding.

13. .....

14. .....

15. .....



16. .....

17. .....

18. .....

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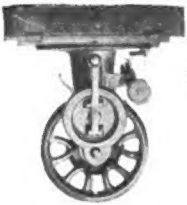
This is a Reprint of Last Month's Pictures.



1. .....

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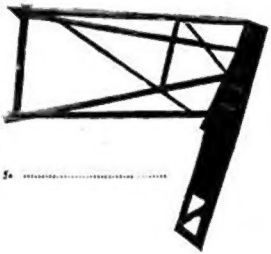

5. .....

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8. .....

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11. .....

12. .....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

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